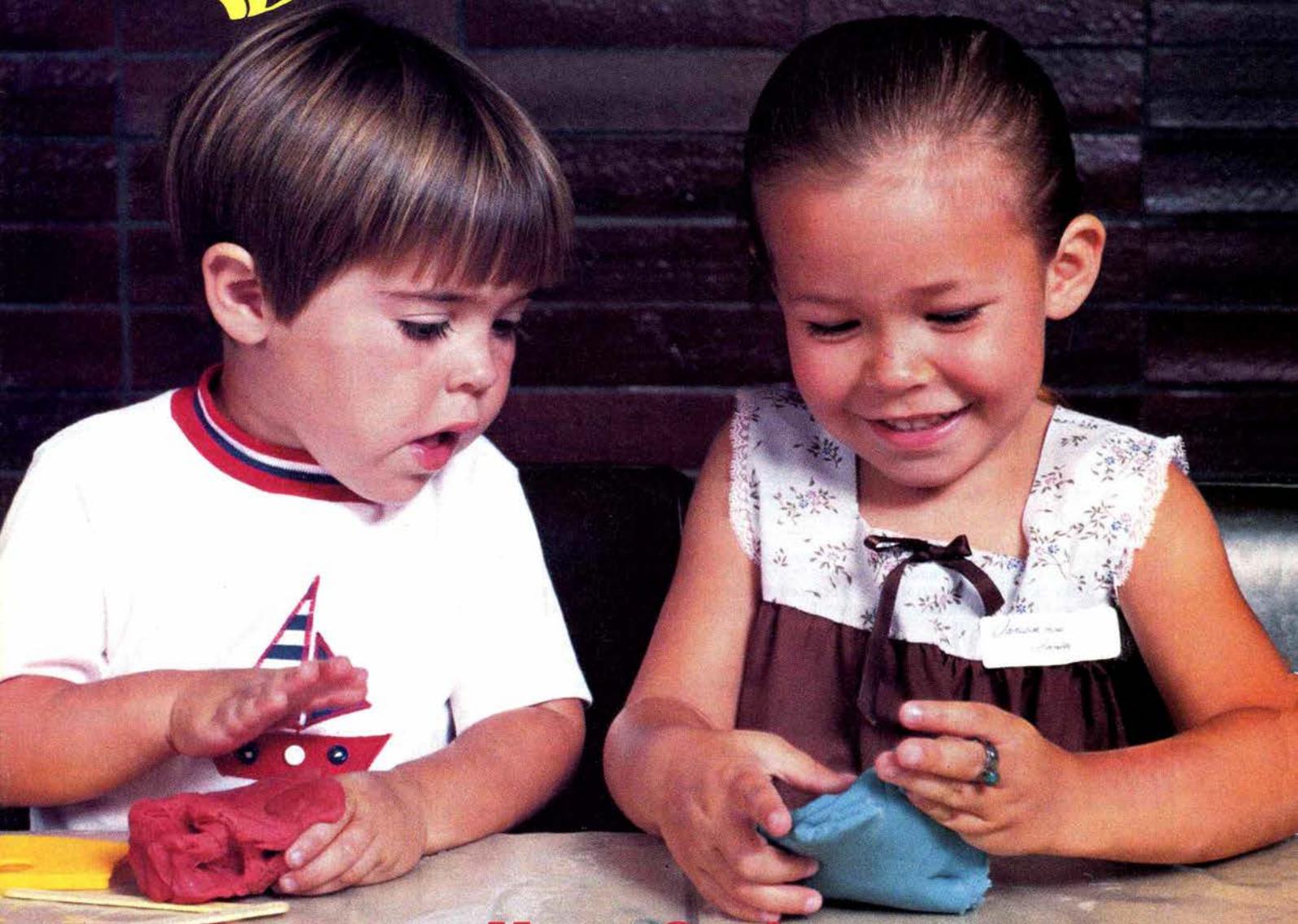


# The Good News

SEPTEMBER 1980



**How God  
Blesses Our Children**

See Page 10

**History of the Worldwide  
Church of God**  
By Herbert W.  
Armstrong

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EDITOR IN CHIEF: **Herbert W. Armstrong**  
 MANAGING EDITOR: **Dexter H. Faulkner**

ASSOCIATE EDITORS: **Sheila Graham, Norman Shoaf**  
 GRAPHICS: **Minette Collins, Michael Hale**

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**COVER: "Behold, children are a gift from the Lord" — so says the Word of God (Ps. 127:3, New American Standard version). The article beginning on page 10 explains the special blessing God places on our little children. Photo by Warren Watson.**

## Letters

**No question**

I would like to thank you very much for your "Personal" in the June-July, 1980, issue of *The Good News* magazine and also for chapter three on "The History of the Beginning and Growth of the Worldwide Church of God." It is very inspiring for me to read about the origins of God's Church in the early '30s. There is no question or the slightest doubt in my mind that the Worldwide Church of God, headed by Jesus Christ, is the true Church of God, and there is absolutely no question or doubt in my mind that you, Mr. [Herbert W.] Armstrong, are the only one *true* representative of God on earth.

George S. Kovanis  
 Pasadena, Calif.

**Inconsistency?**

In the June-July, 1980, issue I noticed what seems to me to be an inconsistency. Please see attached excerpts. I could very well be wrong, and if I am, please send me the appropriate literature to straighten me out.

Charles B. Edwards  
 Florence, S.C.

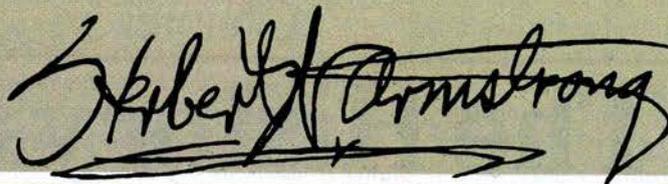
*On page 17, Ronald Kelly expresses his shock at hearing an eminent theologian disagree with Paul about the ordination of women to the ministry. Then on page 19, David Carley says Paul was wrong about the end of the age coming during his lifetime.*

*Both authors are correct — the former matter, though, is a question of doctrine, while the latter is a question of Paul's judgment about the time in which he lived.*

*Paul's statement that women should not be ordained is a point of doctrine and is absolutely correct, since the Scriptures were inspired by God. However, as Herman Hoeh pointed out in his article last month ("The Feast of Tabernacles — Its MEANING for New Testament Christians"), the Church did not understand that God's plan spanned 7,000 years until He inspired John to write the book of Revelation. Paul apparently did not realize that time as we know it was to continue almost 2,000 years more.*

*This judgmental misconception, based on the information available to Paul at the time he wrote, in no way detracts from his apostolic authority to place doctrine into the Church, and his writings make up the majority of the doctrinal instruction in the New Testament.*

Personal from



## Shall We All Leave THE CHURCH OF GOD and Join “THE CHURCH OF PEOPLE”?

**S**ome already have done that. Let's think about it for a moment.

I had a vivid example of this a couple of mornings ago, awakening from a dream. In the dream it seemed to be several years ago when the Church was smaller. There was a young man across the street who looked like a possible one of our leaders. He was about age 30, with outstanding personality and appearance, and an articulate extrovert. Then two other young men of about 30, well dressed, of somewhat impressive appearance and manner, were seen walking over and talking to him. They took pains to avoid me, and I seemed to know they were opposed to me personally.

In the dream I determined to speak immediately with the man they were trying to influence adversely. I told him I knew they were “lobbying” against the Church and against me.

“Yes,” he replied, “but I have to tell you, Mr. Armstrong, I think these men have something worth listening to. They say you arrogate to yourself too much power. You make yourself the leader of the Church. They say *the people* ought to have all the ‘say so.’ The *people* ought to vote on who *they want* to be their leader and on what *they want* to believe and accept as Church doctrine. That sounds like a good idea to me. I think we need more DEMOCRACY.”

I awoke at that point, thinking

about the dream, which had stuck in my mind. But before awakening, I remember I had said to this man in the dream, “Well, the REAL QUESTION is whether this is *GOD'S* Church or *the PEOPLE'S* Church! If it is *GOD'S* Church, then *GOD* is running it, and revealing what we shall believe and teach. *GOD* has the ‘say so.’ *God* runs it through *Jesus Christ*, who is the *HEAD* of the Church. And *Jesus Christ* runs it through His chosen apostle, whom *HE*, not men, chose, prepared and now guides and leads. Those men are getting your eyes off of *GOD* — you are leaving *GOD* out of the picture — out of the Church. You are looking only at *people!* If you want to put *GOD* out of His Church, then you will have to be excommunicated!”

I awakened considerably impressed with the dream. Was *God* revealing to me that *TOO MANY* within the Church membership are *leaving GOD out of the picture?* — in their own minds putting *GOD* out of the Church? Do they think that the kind of men *the people* would vote for ought to be made the *LEADERS* in the Church? — that *the people* should say to *GOD*, “This is *OUR* Church, *God*, we want you to *GET OUT* of the Church and leave us alone. *WE* will run this Church *OUR* way!” I awakened impressed that *TOO MANY* of our people are *LEAVING GOD AND CHRIST OUT OF HIS CHURCH*, and trying to make it *OUR* Church — *the church of the PEOPLE*, and *NOT* the *CHURCH of GOD!*

I could cite you any number of

examples of where this actually *has been done* by leaders under me in the Church. This was done to justify watering down *GOD'S TRUTH*, and the true teaching and doctrine He had put in His Church through His chosen apostle! That was done in Ambassador College, until it was no longer *GOD'S* college. They wanted a college approved by *SATAN'S* world — they called it “accreditation,” although we had already had *GOD'S* accreditation — the *HIGHEST* accreditation. I had to start Ambassador College all over again, with one freshman class! Now, once again, we have *GOD'S* accreditation — but we *don't want* the anti-*GOD* accreditation of Satan's world!

I thought immediately of the time when *God* told His prophet *Samuel* to go to the house, or ranch, of *Jesse*. *God* had chosen one of *Jesse's* sons to be *GOD'S* chosen king over *Israel*. *Jesse* knew right away which son *people* would choose — his eldest son. He was stalwart, handsome, with charming, outgoing, extrovert personality, articulate. He *looked like* a leader. But *God* said to *Samuel*, “No, he is not *MY* choice.”

The second son was almost as handsome and had the appearance of a leader. *God* said *NO!* The third son and so on. “Have you no more sons?” asked *Samuel*.

“Well, no — except only for a stripling of a youth who is out in the field shepherding sheep.”

“Well, bring him,” said *Samuel*. In came the youth none of *the people*

(Continued on page 26)

# The History of the Beginning and Growth of the Worldwide Church of God

By Herbert W. Armstrong

**W**E HAVE NOW COVERED the beginning, in August of 1933, of the present succession of THE CHURCH OF GOD, founded A.D. 31 by Jesus Christ.

It was begun amid persecution, in the midst of the worst economic depression of our time, and with only 19 members, mostly new converts.

In October, 1933, about Feast of Tabernacles time, opportunity had come to me to go on the air on Eugene's [Oregon] minimum-wattage Radio KORE, weekday mornings at 7:30 for 15-minute programs, free of cost.

That had led to launching the Radio Church of God program, 30 minutes on Sunday mornings, beginning the first Sunday in 1934 — Jan. 7.

In the first months after my conversion, spring of 1927, I had conceived the determination to publish a new magazine. I had been in magazine and newspaper advertising since age 18. But the new magazine would be different. It would not be secular. It would carry no commercial advertising. It could not be sold — there would be no subscription price. But it would make the TRUTH PLAIN — a magazine of UNDERSTANDING. God's Word, the Holy Bible, is TRUTH. There would be no magazine like it on earth.

I had planned a "Three-Point Campaign" — spearheaded by the radio broadcast, followed by *The Plain Truth* and reinforced by personal evangelism holding six-nights-a-week meetings.

I quote here from the beginning of Chapter 31 of my *Autobiography*:

"Surely nothing could have started smaller. Born in adversity in the very depths of the Depression, this Work of God was destined to grow to worldwide power.

"But I did not foresee its destiny then. There were no illusions of grandeur. It was not through any planning of mine that the little three-point campaign then being launched was to expand into its present global scope and influence.

"Most people are conscious only of what they see — of the material. They fail to see the invisible hand of God in the working out of things.

"All I had in mind, as *The World Tomorrow* program was being planned late in 1933, was to serve God faithfully wherever He should lead in Lane County, Oregon.

"It is true that 'where there is no vision the people perish.' But few people realize that the source of true vision is God. *There has been vision* behind the planning and phenomenal growth of this great Work. But this is the Work of God, not of man, and the vision and planning has been that of Jesus Christ, the active living HEAD of this Work, not of man."

From the beginning of January, 1934, I began planning to issue the magazine conceived in my mind seven years before — in 1927. God caused me to wait seven years before starting it. And even then it started smaller, surely, than any magazine ever did! There was no money. I had wondered, back in 1927, How would I gain subscribers? For, even though I envisioned a no-subscription-price magazine, still, being experienced in magazine publishing, I knew its circulation must come from subscribers who *requested it*, even for free!

But now that problem was solved. I would announce it over the air. I would try to *sell* the listening audience on it — cause them to *want* to subscribe — even at no subscription price!

Necessity may be the mother of invention. So without money, I borrowed a typewriter. I had barely enough money to buy mimeograph stencils and some inexpensive paper for printing. The local mimeograph dealer offered to allow me to use without cost one of his mimeograph machines. I cut the headlines myself with a mimeograph stylus.

*The Plain Truth* "magazine" made its most humble bow on Feb. 1, 1934. By that time I had obtained a subscription list of around 350, including our own and the Oregon "Sardis" members. Volume I, Number 1, of *The Plain Truth* was a pretty amateurish, homemade sort of

thing. Probably no one but myself would had dignified it with the name "magazine." But it was a **START!** And its contents were not amateurish but professional — publishing God's **TRUTH!**

After the Alvadore, Ore., meetings and launching of the future *World Tomorrow* program and *The Plain Truth*, I soon began holding evangelistic meetings in other Oregon towns.

After the mimeographing of the first *Plain Truth*, apparently the Eugene A.B. Dick Co. dealer did not want to continue loaning me the monthly use of a modern mimeograph. He came up with an antiquated secondhand ancestor of the mimeograph — an old Neostyle, which I managed to buy for \$10. I also managed to buy a secondhand typewriter for \$10. The ancient Neostyle was entirely hand operated. It served us some few years.

After the two or three months' meetings in the old Masonic building — upstairs, with its one-room office — I was offered an office in the old Hampton building, across from the post office in Eugene. My new office rent was \$5 per month.

It was a second-floor small office, with no windows, no ventilation except a transom into an adjoining large room used for labor union meetings. Whenever a union meeting was held, we found next morning stale cigar smoke had filtered into my office through the transom. We could only work a couple hours or so, and had to leave until stale air seeped out.

In this room were a couple of scarred old tables and a couple of old chairs. I had no desk but these old tables. I moved the antiquated Neostyle and secondhand typewriter in, and this became our office for the next two or three years.

I wrote the articles for *The Plain Truth* and cut the mimeograph stencils. My wife was the "pressman." She hand-cranked the Neostyle, feeding each sheet of paper one at a time through it by hand. I was therefore editor and "typesetter." She was my "data processing center," maintaining the mailing list on paper with pen and ink. For filing cabinets I used cardboard cartons obtained gratis at a grocery store, indexing filing folders in these cartons. They had to suffice

instead of modern steel filing cabinets.

Yet it seemed to Mrs. Armstrong and me that we were now "getting up in the world." From no office I had advanced to a no-rent office, and now I had a \$5-per-month office! A single dollar was a considerable item to us then.

Few indeed today know the sacrifice, the poverty to which I had been reduced, the hardship, the opposition, the persecution God led me to endure that **HIS GOSPEL MESSAGE** might be thundered in all the world. Yes, and for the first time since about A.D. 53 — for a duration of 1,900 years! — that God's Message — that of the world's **ONLY HOPE** — could now go to kings and heads of nations over all continents! — that God's own Church could be revitalized — again raised up in our time — and its brethren be awakened to **GOD'S TRUTH**.

I close this chapter with a quotation from the *Autobiography*, written prior to or soon after the year 1960 — with a few additions I wish now — writing in July, 1980 — to insert. With these new additions inserted, I quote:

"I think it well that the reader be given some idea of the financial hardship under which God's present worldwide Work got under way." Some persecutors imply that I was "in it for the money."

"And further because an advanced student here on the Ambassador College campus expressed great surprise the other day to learn that I had been forced into abject poverty and to labor along for 28 long and lean years in economic hardship. He had heard that I had been 'knocked down' economically by God, somewhat as the apostle Paul was by blindness, and plunged into God's service. But he assumed that the financial 'punishment' had consisted of some three or four comparatively short periods of perhaps a few weeks or months.

"So let me say right here something about conversion I find most people do not understand.

"The **REPENTANCE** required by God's *conditions* to being truly converted by receiving God's Holy Spirit is something far different than most people suppose! It is infinitely more than merely 'seeing' God's truth, or some of it, and being good enough to

accept and embrace it. It is something altogether different from merely agreeing with certain doctrines!"

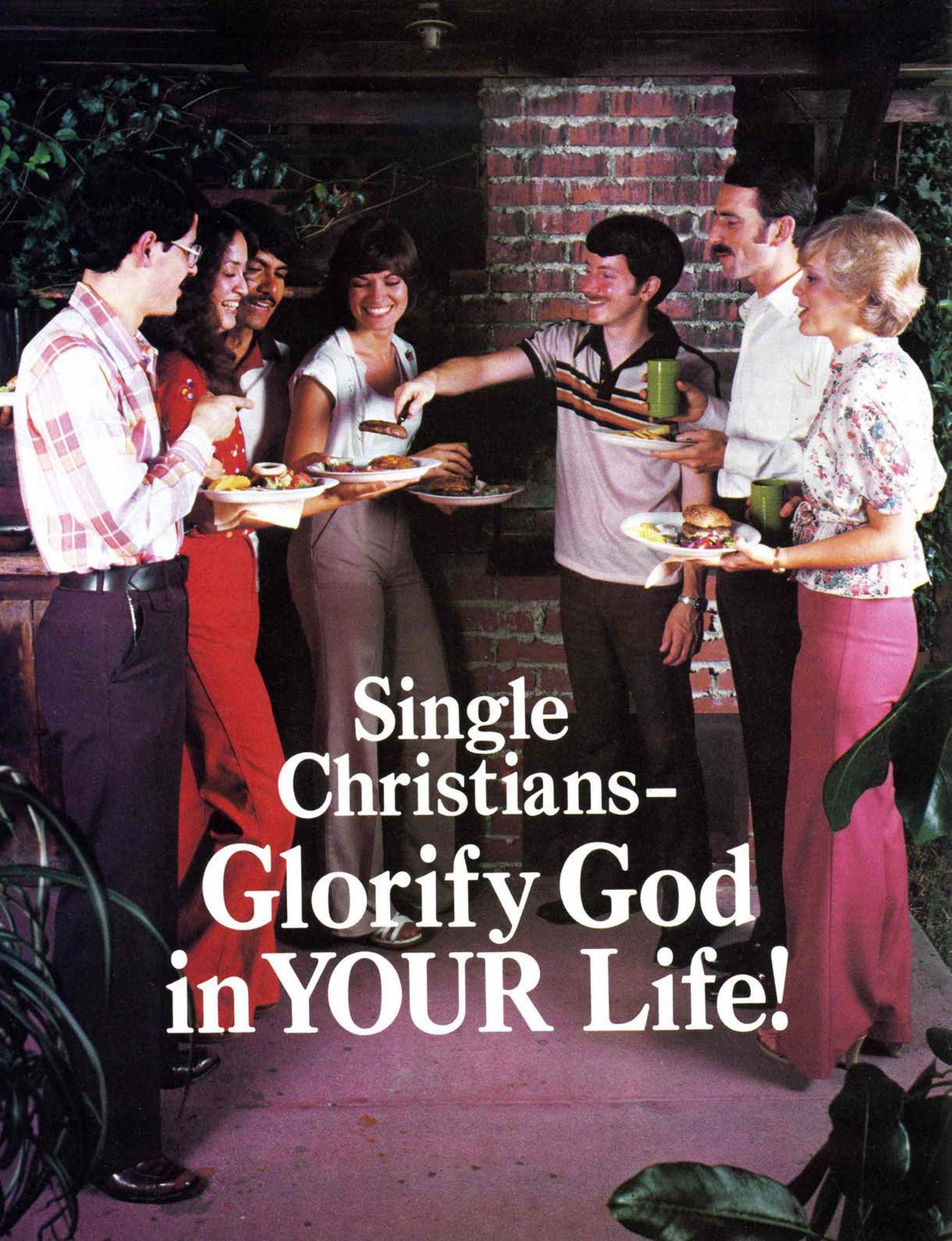
I add now, in 1980, the question, **HOW MANY** of you who profess to be spiritually converted and have come into God's Church have had *that kind* of conversion? You saw the **TRUTH**. You accepted it — perhaps with some elation and joy. Could you be like those in Jesus' parable of the sower and the seed, who "when they have heard the word, immediately receive it with gladness" (Mark 4:16), but are not truly converted (**CHANGED**) — and do not endure and "bring forth fruit" (verse 20)? Conversion is **MUCH MORE THAN THAT!** Continue from the *Autobiography*:

"Whoever you are, **YOU HAVE**, or you *have had*, an **IDOL**. You have had another 'god' before the true living almighty **GOD**. It might be your hobby or your pleasure, favorite sport, TV program or pastime — whatever has filled your interest and your time. It might even be your wife, your husband or children. It could be your job (if it was *first* in your thoughts and affections and interests). It might be your own vanity, your lipstick and personal appearance (if it became vanity). It could be your business or profession (if it were your main goal in life). Very often it is the opinion of your family, your group, club or social or business associates — and what *they* think of you.

"But whatever it is, that idol must be crushed, **SMASHED**, literally torn out of your mind, even though it hurts more than having all your teeth pulled out and perhaps a jawbone too! I believe few if any experience this process painlessly. I know of no anesthetic that will render it pleasurable. How about *your* conversion — if that's what it really was?

"Now I had an idol. My whole mind and heart was set on that idol. I had worked hard, night and day, for that false god. My life objective was the intense desire — the desperate, overpowering, driving ambition — to become 'successful' in the eyes of important business men — to be considered by them as outstandingly '**IMPORTANT**' — to achieve status in the world. I did not have a love for money *as such*. But I coveted the status that would gratify vanity! "After estab-

(Continued on page 27)



Single  
Christians-  
Glorify God  
in YOUR Life!

*What did John the Baptist, Jesus Christ and the apostle Paul — three of the greatest men in the New Testament — have in common? We've printed many articles for married people. Here is a straight-from-the-shoulder article for unmarrieds.*

By Malcolm Tofts

**N**o exact statistics exist, but many people in God's Church are single. They are the never married, the divorced and the widowed. They are a cross section of humanity representing every personality type and ability level. Perhaps you are one of them. I am.

There's nothing abnormal about being single. But oftentimes there is a feeling in society that an unmarried person is somehow less of a human being. There is a notion that you graduate from singledom by becoming married. But nowhere does the Bible tell you to get married as soon as you can. Nowhere does the Bible say a single person is a failure.

Just as there are many reasons for being married, so there are many for being single. We are all individuals. Some singles are creating a secure financial base before they begin to be concerned with marriage. Others may have been hurt by a relationship that didn't work and at least for the time being aren't interested in having anything more than just friendships. Others may have had a mate taken by death and choose not to remarry.

Some, for various reasons, are happy to remain single indefinitely. They might consider marriage if someone really special comes along, but they are in no rush.

Others would like to be married now but selection is the difficulty. Many singles in the Church fall into this category. Especially outside America, area congregations are small and scattered, and transportation is a problem. There may be and often are only a few single people in an area. Perhaps none of them are compatible. What do you do if there is nobody to date? For example, I spent more than two years in a country where there were zero girls to date. So I know whereof I speak.

#### **Learning to love your dandelions**

I have talked to numerous single members who would love to have a

family someday. But in the meantime they have to make the most of their present state. It is like the story of the gardening fanatic who was having trouble with dandelions growing on his prize lawn. Eventually he wrote to the department of agriculture.

"Dear sirs," he began. "During the past few years I have had a prolific outbreak of dandelions all over my bluegrass lawn. I have tried everything. I have cut them, sprayed them and weeded them. I even tried letting my mother loose on them (she likes to make dandelion tea). All of this has been in vain. You are my last hope. Will you please help me?"

In a couple of weeks he received a surprisingly brief reply.

"Dear sir: Seeing as you have tried everything in an attempt to obliterate your dandelions, you have only one alternative left. We suggest that you learn to love them."

We have to learn to love our dandelions. We should learn to be content in whatever state we find ourselves in. The apostle Paul did (Phil. 4:11). We can do the same.

If we make the most of whatever we have in this life, one day soon God will give us a lawn without dandelions.

Let's call a spade a spade. Two main problems that singles have to face are a sense of aloneness and unfulfilled sex needs. It's not that single people are the only ones who have to face these problems. Some married folk also have difficulties in these areas. But for singles these trials can be that much more acute.

#### **Aloneness**

Some singles are plain old-fashioned lonely. Loneliness is a major problem for many people in our 20th century world. Isn't it ironic that at a time when we have wall-to-wall people, individuals experience a sense of isolation?

Loneliness is one of the most diffi-

cult problems for a person to face, because by its very nature it's a problem you have to face on your own. Every other problem can be shared. But, conversely, when you are able to share the problem of loneliness it is no longer a problem.

I spent more than two years in a nation where there was no one to date. I don't mind admitting that there were times when I was lonely. At times the loneliness almost drove me insane. Sundays were especially difficult. They were deep holes of isolation. After all the warmth and companionship of the Sabbath what do you do on Sunday? It was a real difficulty. Sundays hurt. I felt like some pieces of the jigsaw puzzle of life were missing. Something was eluding me. Sometimes just the idea of being single was the most aggravating element. I don't always have a perfect attitude and during periods of isolation it was sometimes a struggle to keep a positive frame of mind.

Every human being has a deep-rooted need for human contact. A person rarely feels like laughing alone. We like to share our thoughts and feelings with significant others. And we like to have others on our team pulling for us.

Some singles go through excruciating bouts of loneliness. These can lead to depression. But others, perhaps with stronger psyches, do not experience such a deep sense of loneliness. This can particularly be the case with unmarrieds who live in large Church areas where there are many activities. Some of these do not like inferences that they are lonely, as the word carries negative connotations. And understandably so, but many admit to a sense of "aloneness."

Aloneness implies being on one's own but it does not necessarily have a negative meaning. Aloneness well describes the state of being single. You can be alone and happy. But it's difficult to be lonely and happy.

But we all need friends. It's not good for man to be alone (Gen. 2:18). So a person without a spouse especially needs to develop strong friendships with other brethren. An unmarried individual needs to firmly tie himself into the Church. When you don't have a family the Church becomes your family (Matt. 19:29).

### **Building friendships**

The best way to find a friend is to be one. When you are a friend others will seek you out. Putting it another way, the best way to mitigate feelings of aloneness is to take aloneness away from somebody else. You'll find that a person caught up in acts of giving will not be so aware of his own problems.

Giving friendship is like the story of the two men who trudged a long distance through the blizzard. Exhausted, they had only one mile to go when they came across an injured man lying in the snow. One of the travelers refused to help and pressed on. The other stopped, put the hurt man over his shoulder and staggered forward. Half a mile later they found the man who refused to help. He was lying in the snow, dead from the cold.

The traveler who stopped to help, by taking on an additional load, had raised his body temperature. It kept both him and the man he was carrying alive. They made it to the shelter. But if one hadn't stopped to help the other they would have both been overcome by the cold. It was the giving that kept the rescuer going. It can be the same for you.

Giving means being willing to listen to others. Don't get your watch out to claim your fair share of speaking time. "Blessed are the meek" — the ones willing to drink in of other people's ideas and feelings, to listen to others' stories rather than always wanting to tell their own — "for they shall inherit the earth" (Matt. 5:5). These are the people God wants governing.

### **What about sex?**

Sex is not just a problem for single folk, but also for many married people. The principles here apply to us all.

Sex is a raw physical drive. It is also an emotional and psychological

want. So, if you were Satan, what would you use to lure single brethren in God's Church? What would you use to try to entice them into the world where you could finish them off? You guessed it — sex with a capital S. You'd have it thrust at people from all quarters. You'd display it on every street corner. You'd saturate society with every form of cheap and perverted sex — anything but wholesome sex. Well, Satan has done the same.

Make no mistake, Satan is at war with us. Probably the only more intense emotion than the devil's hatred of us is God's love for us. Satan knows what you could accomplish in God's Kingdom and he despises you for it. He will use every dirty trick in the book — and some that aren't in the book — to drag us down.

Just look at how our enemy tried to get Joseph through Potiphar's wife (Gen. 39:7-20). But he failed. Joseph was man enough not to cave in. To stand up for what's right — to demonstrate character — takes backbone, not wishbone.

God gives simple instructions. There's a simple formula for staying out of this kind of trouble. Everyone, whether married or single, should memorize it. It's not long. Just two words. "Flee fornication" (I Cor. 6:18). Notice God does not say to get as close as you can but don't take part in it. God says to flee — as fast as your little legs will move you. If faced with temptation, retreat at the speed of light.

Fleeing fornication means staying away from singles bars. Their plastic, artificial environment is not the answer. These meat markets are not a suitable place for brethren. They provide no solution or fulfillment.

Fleeing fornication means avoiding red-light districts. If they are between you and where you are going, drive or walk, as the case may be, around them (Prov. 9:13-18).

Fleeing fornication means not being alone with members of the opposite sex whom you know are promiscuous. Avoid compromising situations. Choose carefully the people you spend time with (Prov. 13:20).

Fleeing fornication means being careful about what you watch on the movie or television screen. Think

about what letting your mind dwell on it may lead to. Be the prudent man who foresees evil and hides himself (Prov. 22:3).

Fleeing fornication means that you women reading this article should not be naive. Understand the way some men think. Don't dress to provoke them. And don't be deceived by what some men say to you. It is natural for a woman to want to be cherished, but frankly, face the facts. Many men in the world will be loving and gentle, but their hidden motive is to wear down a woman's principles so they can experience her body. Don't be one of those seduced by smooth words (Eph. 5:5-6).

Illicit sex is habit forming. It's best not to get the hook in your mouth. A fish has to put up a fierce fight to break from a hook. Of course, it can be done, but it's far better not to take the bait in the first place. The more the body is fed, the more gratification is required. And whoremongers, unless they repent, will not be in God's Kingdom (I Cor. 6:9) — and such were some of you (verse 11), but you were washed clean. Your sins were thrown to the other side of the universe. But you must be determined not to sin again.

### **Playing a winning game**

With God's help we can beat Satan at his own game. We can turn it all to our advantage. How? If we want to build physical muscle we need some resistance — for example, a heavy weight to lift against. Then when it hurts, muscle is built. The same is true spiritually. Suffering is the origin of growth. Fighting against the pulls of the world will help us build character. And it is character, not our physical comfort, with which God is most concerned.

A single person who can control his sex drive is a person who can control every major area of his life. Singledom is a chance to develop character. Hot fires can burn and consume or give energy for growth. The same furnace can make or break you. Which will it be?

Obedience to God is largely a matter of habit. If one leads a full, giving and sharing life there is not much time for idle daydreams that can lead to disaster. But to bring every thought into captivity (II Cor. 10:5)

is not easy. It requires persistence and courage. We may have a hard time of it now (Acts 14:22), but when we look back from the perspective of being in God's Kingdom then it will all be worth it (Rom. 8:18).

### Some successful singles

We single folk in the Church have something that singles in the world do not have. We have the hope of God's Kingdom. Once a person has this, his perspective changes. It becomes his goal (Matt. 6:33). Everything else is a backdrop to that calling. One should not be preoccupied with one's state in life, but preoccupied in helping to do the Work. Backing up Christ's apostle should be the primary thing.

The champion of singles is Jesus Christ. True, He was married in one sense to Israel. But He has not married in the usual sense of the word. He has not lived in wedlock with a woman. As a human He had to fly solo. Our Messiah learned what being single was about.

Christ experienced everything a single person experiences. So we do not have a High Priest who cannot be touched with our infirmities; He was in all points tempted as we are (Heb. 4:15). He understands our situation and has compassion on us. That's why He's our Champion.

His cousin John the Baptist was also single. Was John a failure in life? Was he in some way a lesser human being because he never married? Of him Christ said, "Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist" (Matt. 11:11). John was a successful single.

In New Testament times who was the apostle who labored more fervently than any of the others? It was Paul (I Cor. 15:10). Paul may have been married at one time, because there are indications that before conversion he was a member of the Sanhedrin, and you had to be married to be a part of that group. But he was not married during his time as an apostle (I Cor. 7:7-8). Did his wife die? Did she leave him?

Anyway, Paul was another successful single.

Thus three of the top men in the New Testament were single. This is not to imply that marriage isn't good.

Of course it is. Marriage to the right person at the right time is a wonderful gift from God.

But being single is also a gift from God (I Cor. 7:7). Singledom may be a gift you don't want, but God's gifts are good gifts (Matt. 7:11). We should relax and let God give His gifts as He sees fit. He knows us well enough to be able to determine what is best for us.

Christ led a life free from sin. He was our perfect example. He did not marry in the normal sense of the word. Obviously then, it is not wrong not to marry. I realize that there are reasons why Christ did not marry, but maybe there are reasons why you also might not choose to marry just yet.

Take a look at Luke 2 in terms of people who choose to be single. God does give us a choice in life. Notice the lifestyle that the person in Luke 2:36-37 chose. "One Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Aser: she was of a great age, and had lived with an husband seven years from her virginity." Read the account carefully. She was a widow for about 84 years. That's apparently what she chose. I imagine she may have had ample opportunities for remarriage, but she chose to remain single. It was not a sin. And she was not a failure. But since it is not good for a man or woman to be alone, she undoubtedly built strong friendships with other converted people.

Some of the most serving women I know are single. They are beautiful on the inside and the outside. God appreciates them. They are not failures or in any way lesser human beings. They've either been widowed or haven't met someone who is right for them. And they have the strength to remain single until they do.

They aren't going to be pressurized into marriage. They realize that marriage is too wonderful and important to be foisted on them by the pressure of friends and relatives. It must come from the inside — from the head and heart as it is guided by God's Spirit and sound counsel. After all, God's will is that we first be godly people aiming for His Kingdom (Matt. 6:33), not first be married. Priorities have to be kept straight.

There are no second-class citizens in God's Church. We are all one in

Christ Jesus (Gal. 3:26). God would not have called us if we didn't have an important part to play in finishing the Work. There is no room for division. Whatever state we are in, our main preoccupation is to put our shoulder to the wheel and push as hard as we can to help Herbert W. Armstrong finish the job of warning this world. That is our calling, and there isn't much time left now.

### Righteousness the goal

Eternity is one long stretch of time. And it will be occupied by spirit beings. Spirit beings, like the angels, do not marry (Mark 12:25). For the future eons we will be single. I mean unmarried in the human, physical sense of the word. We will, of course, be married to Jesus Christ. But we will not be married in the usual sense of the word. In that sense, marriage is only for this time.

The top two members of the God-head never married in the physical sense of the word. So don't ever think that you can't qualify for a top position because you are unmarried. We don't have to be married to be balanced human beings in this life and spirit beings in the next.

Obviously marriage is a wonderful institution and highly desirable. It pictures beautifully the God-plane relationships we will have in the next life. Nothing I am saying is meant to detract from the beauty of a marriage lived in accordance to God's laws. A good marriage is perhaps the nearest thing to complete happiness that a person can find in this world. To be married to the right person at the right time with a right attitude is a tremendous blessing. It is the ideal.

But wedlock is not necessary for salvation. Marriage is not a qualification for God's Kingdom. *Righteousness is*. That's the point I am making. It doesn't matter what condition we are in, as long as we fully serve God in a righteous state. Whether married or single, we should glorify God in our lives.

After Solomon tried everything (including 700 wives and 300 concubines), he summed it all up in Ecclesiastes 12:13, "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep His commandments: for this is the whole duty of man." □



# Do You Like to Be Corrected?

By Dibar Apartian

**B**e honest with yourself! Do you actually *like* to be corrected?

Hardly anyone does. Receiving correction in the right attitude is one of life's most difficult responsibilities.

But a truly converted Christian should like — and even welcome — correction. It helps him or her grow. It's easy, of course, to see someone else's faults, but it is not so easy to recognize our own mistakes. We often resent being told about our shortcomings, especially if we see that the person who corrects us has his own problems to overcome.

The purpose of life is spiritual growth and change. But such growth is impossible without reproof and correction. "All scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work" (II Tim. 3:16-17, Revised Standard Version).

What is reproof? What is correction? Do these words have clear, specific meanings to you? Check your dictionary and learn their definitions, because both are necessary for our "training in righteousness."

Every one of us must study the Bible with an honest desire to be taught and corrected by it. Unfortunately, some in the Church have a self-righteous attitude when they read the Bible or hear a sermon. They are convinced that the admonishment applies to someone else and not them. So Bible study loses its effectiveness as far as they are concerned.

God says, "He who heeds instruction is on the path to life, but he who rejects reproof [or correction] goes astray" (Prov. 10:17, RSV).

Are you on the "path to life," or are you going astray because you reject reproof? I have often heard Christ's apostle, Herbert W. Armstrong, say that he asks God regularly for correction. Why don't we all pray the same prayer? Remember: The more you are converted, the more you will welcome correction.

### **"Wash me thoroughly"**

Some of us think we get too much correction, but God gives us exactly what we need. However, we all have a tendency to give more correction

than we should! It's a matter of attitude — we need a converted, Christian attitude, based on love.

To receive correction in the right spirit, you must be willing to admit you are wrong — and that's hard for the carnal mind to do. Get down on your knees and ask God to help you see your faults. Ask Him to change you, and then be willing to change.

Look how David pleaded his case in Psalm 51. He first acknowledged his guilt. "Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin," he asked God (verse 2). But how did he expect to be washed and cleansed by God? By correction and reproof — and chastisement if necessary.

"Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts: and in the hidden part thou shalt make me to know wisdom. . . . Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy spirit from me" (verses 6, 10-11).

David wanted to be corrected, even though it meant making a serious effort and undergoing suffering. He was ready and willing to accept God's correction, no matter how it came and however unpleasant. He was indeed a man after God's own heart.

How often do you ask God for correction and reproof? Do you expect it to come only from Him and never from a human being? I've heard people say, "If correction came from God, I would accept it, but I wouldn't listen if it came from some man."

This reasoning is totally wrong. When you ask God for correction, you must be willing to accept it, no matter how it comes to you.

### **Paul's conversion**

Before his conversion, the apostle Paul didn't realize that he was on the wrong track. He believed he was doing God a service by persecuting the Christians. Proud of his background and learning as a Pharisee, he followed the way that "seemeth right unto a man." When Stephen, the first Christian martyr, was stoned, "Saul [whose name was later changed to Paul] was consenting unto his death" (Acts 8:1).

Here you see a powerful, influential man witnessing a murder — and approving of it! Shortly thereafter, he

was "yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord" when he went to the high priest to ask of him "letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of this way [Christianity], whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem" (Acts 9:1-2).

Filled with this hatred and convinced he was doing the right thing, Saul was on his way to Damascus when God struck him down. What happened then? What was Saul's attitude when corrected? What were the first questions he asked of God? "Who art thou, Lord? . . . what wilt thou have me to do?" (verses 5-6).

These beautiful questions will lead anyone God is calling to true conversion if they are asked honestly and their answers applied. Saul wanted to do what was right in God's sight. Until then, in his ignorance, he was on the wrong course. But upon God's calling, he sought correction. From that time on Saul never again persecuted the Christians. In fact, he himself became one of the most persecuted Christians.

Was it easy for Paul to be corrected that way? He had to learn all over how to serve God, to turn the other cheek, to be a Christian. He was probably ridiculed and scoffed at by his former friends. But nothing stopped him from wanting to do God's will.

### **Change what needs to be changed**

When you are corrected, don't look for excuses to reject the admonishment. For instance, if the person who corrects you needs to change, himself, your task as a Christian is to admit where you are wrong and change. The other person's need for correction does not solve your particular problem, nor does it justify your attitude. "Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin" (Jas. 4:17).

For some time now, Mr. Armstrong has been telling us that the Church, as a whole, is not ready for Christ's return. Do you grasp the seriousness of this warning? It means that you and I have not accepted correction as we should have — and that we have not changed enough! Con-

*(Continued on page 29)*



# Our Little Children— Specially Blessed by God!

By Selmer L. Hegvold

**M**ost of us cannot help but marvel over the lovely innocence of beautiful children cooing away in their cribs, crawling on the floor or scampering about the play area outdoors.

Neither can we help but believe there are angels who constantly protect these little ones from injury or death as they blunder thoughtlessly into danger after danger!

Our children do not possess charmed lives. They can get into mischief quickly — stumble into danger at the wink of an eye. But angels do exist. God's angels can and do intercede for children faster than that "wink of an eye." The Bible tells of angels intervening in the lives of God's servants in both the Old and New Testaments. Time and space cannot hinder their speedy intercession to save God's people — and their children — from dire calamities.

## All the children of God

To God we are all His own little children, if we are begotten by His Spirit (I John 2:1, 12, 18). He watches over and protects us with a special loving concern.

And we can be thankful that he does! We really are, of ourselves, helpless amidst the growing problems of this age. Not just ordinary dangers surround us and our children, but God's Church also faces assaults from the media and hostile groups outside the organization. We are indeed like little children, as defenseless as they are in this world of Satan's. We need help from above — the "strong hand from someplace"!

Increasing pressures on parents striving to rear their children prop-

erly and safely wear us all down. Some give up and let their progeny go their own way.

Only when we are truly born of God as members of His Family in the Kingdom of God will we have universal safety from the wiles of Satan. Without the devil around (Rev. 20:2-3), great strides can be made. Only when Christ's rulership over all the earth comes can we expect complete relief from the dangers that surround us and our children.

But what about now? How can we raise our children safely and teach them the proper way of life in today's world? Well, would God call us to understand His truth and actively participate in His great Work if He were not willing to provide protection for us and our children? No, our children can, in the future, be strong laborers for God.

The Kingdom of God is now just ahead of us. The prime talent for the Work of the Kingdom resides in the homes of the saints today — in our children. God knows this. He planned it that way. And our Creator expresses His great love for our children through the many blessings He makes available for them.

## Blessing of little children

Jesus Christ showed great concern for little children. However, initially the disciples failed to understand this concern. "Then were there brought unto him little children, that he should put his hands on them, and pray: and the disciples rebuked them. But Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven. And he laid his hands on

them, and departed thence" (Matt. 19:13-15).

"And they brought unto him also infants, that he would touch them: but when his disciples saw it, they rebuked them. But Jesus called them unto him, and said, Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God. Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child shall in no wise enter therein" (Luke 18:15-17).

Luke and Mark broadened the concept of the blessing of the little children. Luke used the term *infants* to describe these children, and Mark recorded that Christ was able to take them up in His arms (Mark 10:13-16). That Christ could take them up in His arms shows they were not more than six or seven years of age. It is obvious Christ was blessing small children, too young to provide solutions to their own problems.

Notice that God has commissioned angels to the task at hand. "Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, That in heaven *their angels* do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven" (Matt. 18:10).

Herbert W. Armstrong recognized God's concern for children and the importance of the ceremony Christ performed. Thus, from the beginning of the Church in this era, Mr. Armstrong has observed this moving ceremony for our children.

For years the Church conducted the blessing of the little children — those not blessed in previous years — in the last afternoon service of the Feast of Tabernacles. Over the years, as the

(Continued on page 13)

# How to Try the Spirits

By Leroy Neff

*There are many false prophets in the world. Do you know the scriptural way to tell the difference between them and the true servants of God?*

**T**he apostle John wrote: "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world" (I John 4:1-3).

Just what does this scripture mean? Does it mean that anyone who says that Jesus Christ *came* in human flesh about 2,000 years ago is of God?

If this is what John meant, then we might conclude that most, if not all, professing Christians through the ages were "of God," because they said Christ came in the flesh — even if they continually broke all His commandments. We might also conclude that other religions that reject the Bible, or reject the New Testament but still believe that there was such a person as Jesus of Nazareth who lived "in the flesh," were also "of God."

Obviously, this must not be what John meant. Even though he was addressing a specific problem of his day, which may or may not be as prevalent now in exactly the same way, his statement is just as true today as it was then. How then should we understand it?

Let us note that John is talking about "false prophets" (verse 1). Such prophets do not receive their inspiration from God or the Holy Spirit. They receive their "inspira-

tion" directly or indirectly from a *different spirit* — from Satan the devil or his demons. Their teachings are sometimes completely false. Other times they may be very near the truth, but nevertheless still not correct.

This text is telling us how to distinguish the false from the true. When we hear from a "prophet" or "minister" we may measure him by the principles given here and elsewhere in the Scriptures to know if he is of God and inspired by His Spirit, or led by a contrary and false spirit.

## What does "is come" mean?

The key to understanding this scripture is found in the words "is come in the flesh," which occur in both verses two and three. What does this phrase mean?

It is commonly believed that these words say "came in the flesh," not *is* or *has come* in the flesh. If John meant "came" instead of "is come" then many professing Christians, Jews and Mohammedans might be considered to be "of God." Many of them believe that Jesus did live in the flesh and that He was a good rabbi, or that He was a prophet or a religious leader of His time.

"Came in the flesh" implies that He came and then left, and is *no longer* here "in the flesh." But the words say that He "is come." This implies more than just "came"; rather, it implies that He came and is *still here* "in flesh." This is a present, continuing condition. (The word *the* in the phrase "in *the* flesh" was added in the English translation, as a Greek text or interlinear Greek-English text will show.)

How can it be that Christ could

still today be "in flesh," since He went to heaven almost 2,000 years ago and now sits at the right hand of God in heaven?

The next verse begins to reveal the answer. "Greater is he that is *in* you, than he that is *in* the world" (verse 4). Who is *in you*, if you are a real Christian?

## Christ lives in Christians today

Some might say that the Holy Spirit is in us, if we are true Christians. They would be right (verse 13), but there is more. "Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and *he in us*" (verse 13). Who is the *He* in this verse? The answer is that "God dwelleth *in us*" (verse 12). Does this refer to God the Father or the Son, Jesus Christ?

"I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me" (Gal. 2:20).

Jesus Christ, who has come *in flesh*, is still "in flesh" today. He is living His life in His servants who make up the spiritual "body of Christ" to this very day!

This truth is also mentioned in I John 3:24: "And he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him, and he in him. And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us." Jesus Christ lives "in flesh" of those who keep the commandments. It is only logical to expect that as Jesus Christ kept His Father's commandments (John 15:10), those true Christians He lives in will also keep the Father's commandments, following Christ's example (I John 2:3-6).

Notice also I John 5:20: "And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life."

II John 7 makes another statement about false prophets and deceivers: "For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ *is come* in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist."

There is a slight variation in the Greek text from which the English words *is come* are translated in this verse. The words here literally mean "is coming." Here it is again apparent that Jesus Christ not only came in the flesh, but that He still "is coming" in flesh, living His life in true Christians today.

### How does Christ live in us?

If Christ is really living in us, we will live the same kind of life Christ lived. Christ will not live his life in us in a contrary manner to the way He lived *in the flesh*.

We already saw that Christ kept His Father's commandments. If Christ is living in us, we will be living that way too! When we fail to live up to that standard perfectly, as a result of a sin, we will repent and quit living in that sin. Our overall way of life will be that of commandment-keeping, not commandment-breaking.

A person in whom Christ is living will know the true doctrines of His Church, as they are revealed in the Bible. "If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God" (John 7:17). A true Christian will also have love and not hatred for other true Christians — brethren in God's Church (John 13:34-35).

Down through the ages God has sent servants to carry out His Work and His will, but most people rejected them. This was true of the prophets and of Jesus Christ Himself and all His apostles and ministers down to and including the present time. But those who have Jesus living His life in them will not make this mistake. They recognize and accept those Jesus Christ sends. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that receiveth whomsoever I send receiveth me; and he that receiveth

me receiveth him that sent me" (John 13:20).

### Would Christ reject His own rule?

Going one step further, such people will also accept the rule of those Christ sends. "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you" (Heb. 13:17).

Some who have left God's Church loudly proclaim their loyalty to Christ while they reject His rule in His true Church! Such people will not "hear" the ones God sends (I John 4:6) because Christ is no longer living in them, or else never did!

Since Jesus Christ lives in His people — in His Church — those people will keep the Sabbath holy, the same day He kept holy each week. They further will keep the same Holy Days that Christ kept and commanded to be kept forever (Lev. 23:21, 31, 41). (Jesus Christ is the God who was with Israel in the wilderness. He gave the Ten Commandments and the Holy Days to His people during the time of Moses. See I Cor. 10:4.)

Since God's people collectively — the Church — are the modern "body of Christ," they will be doing His Work instead of "doing their own thing." Just as Jesus said He did the Work that the Father sent Him to do (John 4:34), so His servants today, since He lives in them today, will be doing that same Work.

The true servants of Christ will not be speaking against God's law or the testimony of Christ. Most ministers today preach against the law of God and many say you are under a curse if you try to obey that law, not understanding the scriptures on this subject. "To the *law* and to the *testimony*: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is *no light in them*" (Isa. 8:20).

There are many false prophets and ministers in the world today. Examine those who claim to be the true ministers of God by these Bible principles, and then you can know whether they are led by and inspired by the Holy Spirit of God, or by some other spirit. □

## Little Children

(Continued from page 11)

numbers attending the Feast grew and the number of infants to be blessed increased, the demands in time to perform the service also grew.

Mr. Armstrong instructed that the blessing of the little children should no longer be done at the Feast sites. He noted that God had raised up numerous churches pastored by dedicated, qualified ministers of Jesus Christ. The service became the responsibility of the pastors in these churches.

The second Sabbath after the Feast of Tabernacles was set for the parents to come prepared for the service in each church. So just before the sermon on the second Sabbath following the close of the Feast, the scriptures quoted above are read and a general prayer is given. The ministers, in pairs, take each little child up, lay their hands on him or her and pray for God's protection and blessing beyond that which the parents are able to provide.

### A profound meaning

As members watch and each child is taken up in the ministers' arms, a sentiment of appreciation for God's love and concern spreads throughout the congregation. Prayers pour up silently before His throne, adding an "amen" to those of the ministers who pray over the children.

Throughout the 15 minutes or so of this special ceremony, all appreciate that each child being so blessed is specifically sanctified before God in heaven. Many adult tears come at the innocence and trust in the eyes of the little ones as they look up into the faces of the ministers holding them. There is no comparable service in the Church of the living God!

Look forward to this ceremony in your church. This special blessing is for *your* children, so they can have God's guaranteed extra protection and blessing for the troubled days through which they have yet to live. Then when Christ returns — very shortly now — to receive them to Himself, they will have been prepared to become co-laborers with Him in His limitless universe for all eternity! □

# Good News on the British Work

## God's Work in Britain

It has been three decades since Herbert W. Armstrong sent his son Richard to London, England, to establish the first branch of God's Work outside the United States. For the British churches this period has been every bit as interesting and eventful as the times in which the churches mentioned in the book of Acts existed.

Many readers will asso-

ciate the Work in Britain with the Bricket Wood campus of Ambassador College, which was for 15 years the headquarters of the British churches. However, in 1978 the college buildings and grounds were sold and Church headquarters was transferred to the Work's printing press complex in nearby Radlett.

Bricket Wood served a

great purpose by bearing much fruit over the years. Graduates around the world support the goals and purposes of the Worldwide Church of God.

So while an era may have passed with the college closure, the Church in the United Kingdom continues to fulfill its main objective — preaching the Gospel to the British people.

## Promotions in 1980

With radio and television still unavailable to *World Tomorrow* programming, the Work is using a variety of newspaper and magazine ads plus *Plain Truth* exhibition stands to get the Gospel message out to the British people.

In 1980 a great deal has been accomplished with a controlled program of national media advertising, backed up by *Plain Truth* campaigns at key exhibition sites around the country. The exhibition program included stands in 25 sites. These sites included a stand of display boards advertising the magazine along with an eight-minute audiovisual presentation giving background information about *The Plain Truth*. The British Work's officials have been amazed at the number of people who told stand personnel that they used to read *The Plain Truth* but did not realize it was still available.

One million specially printed color leaflets, containing background information and offering a free subscription, were also distributed at the exhibition stands and elsewhere in the cities where exhibitions were being held. In addition, *The Plain Truth* was offered by direct mail to civic leaders, businessmen and doctors in each city.

However, perhaps most encouraging about the promotional program were the results of advertising *The Plain Truth* directly in several of Britain's leading national newspapers such as *The Daily Mail*, *The Daily Telegraph*, *The Sunday Express* and *The Observer*.

The average total circulation of these national newspapers is almost two million, and the very first newspaper advertisement this year pro-



Exterior view of the press complex at Radlett, England. (Photos on this page by Philip Stevens)

## The Director and the Job

Frank Brown, regional director for the United Kingdom, Black Africa and Scandinavia, was ordained an evangelist in January, 1976.

His experience as business manager at Pasadena for the previous 2½ years and a total of nine years of broad administrative experience in the American Work has proved invaluable in supervising the churches and developing advertising and promotional programs in the United Kingdom.

A native Englishman, Mr. Brown graduated from the British campus of Ambassador College in 1965. He married Sharon Roesler after be-

ing ordained into the full-time ministry of the Church, and in late 1965 came to Pasadena to assist in the French Department. The following year he became the assistant to the Work's business manager.

Since his appointment as regional director of the British Work in early 1976, Mr. Brown has been streamlining and consolidating the Church's United Kingdom operations to allow it to rely solely upon indigenous income.

He has also devoted much of his attention to improving public awareness of the Worldwide Church of God and its role in Britain.



Frank Brown

As part of this awareness program, Church treasurer Stanley R. Rader spoke at London's exclusive Travellers Club in mid-January, 1980.

duced almost 2,000 responses. Thousands of people commute to work in England by train and most of them read these national dailies while traveling. During the year ahead, the British should have a far greater chance of coming in contact with an advertisement for *The Plain Truth*.

## The Open Door

The door opened to preaching the Gospel to Britain as early as 1953, when Jan. 1 the *World Tomorrow* broadcast was beamed across the English Channel by Radio Luxembourg.

Then in September, 1954,

Herbert W. Armstrong conducted a series of evangelistic campaigns in Belfast, Northern Ireland; Glasgow, Scotland; and Manchester and London, England. On Sept. 17, the first British member of the Church of God was baptized.

The stage was set for further growth, and in 1956 the first regular church was established in London. By the end of 1958, *Plain Truth* circulation had climbed to about 12,000.

In the early 1960s growth in Britain ebbed because of poor radio reception. Then the seemingly impossible happened, when the so-called pirate ships opened their doors to *The World Tomorrow*



Richard Armstrong established the British branch of God's Work three decades ago. (Good News photo)

broadcast in 1965.

Over the next 20 months, most of Britain was blanketed with the Gospel message. *Plain Truth* circulation

leaped to 120,000. But British government legislation was enacted to prevent these ship stations from further effective broadcasting.

Despite this setback, however, the British branch of God's Work displayed sterling resilience.

A massive *Plain Truth* newsstand program, increasing circulation to 300,000 magazines a month, coupled with countrywide evangelistic campaigns followed in the 1970s.

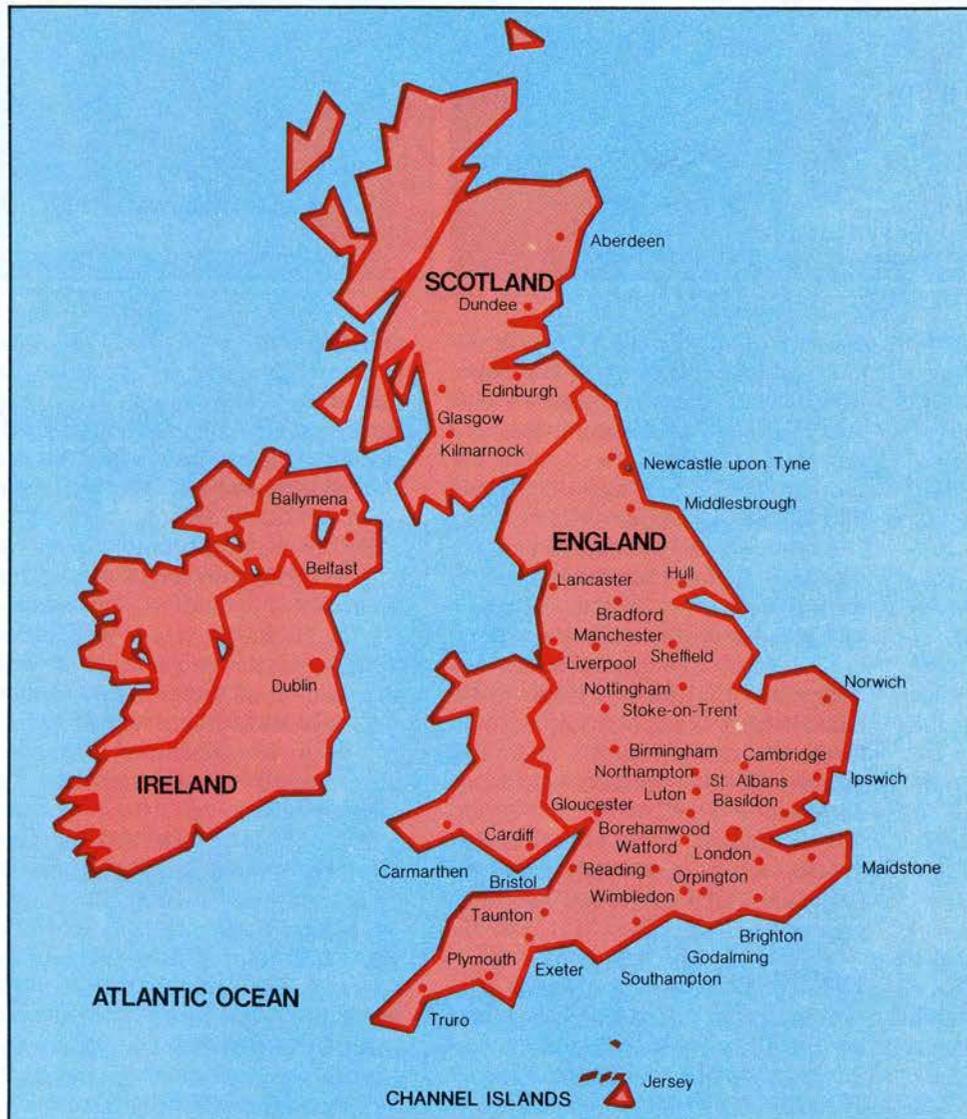
## Church Growth

There are now 41 churches and several Bible studies in the United Kingdom and Ireland, comprising about 2,200 members. Church growth is running about 5 percent per year and church attendance is up 15.5 percent. And ministers are increasingly hard pressed to visit the upsurge in prospective members.

Besides the regular Bible studies, many studies are now conducted by church pastors in members' homes because people can't afford to travel to main centers. This practice harks back to New Testament days, when brethren often met for Sabbath services in the homes of prominent members.

Festival attendance has grown at the steady rate of 5 percent for the past few years, and 1980 is to be a banner year for the Feast of Tabernacles in the United Kingdom. For the first time since 1974, the brethren will all be meeting at the same place — the south coast resort of Brighton. Some 4,200 are expected to attend. There is a strong possibility that Herbert W. Armstrong will speak to the British brethren live direct from Tucson by way of microwave satellite communication on the evening following the first Holy Day.

The British brethren are grateful for the growth God is granting in the United Kingdom and Ireland and look forward to much greater increases as the "end of the age" rushes closer to reality. □

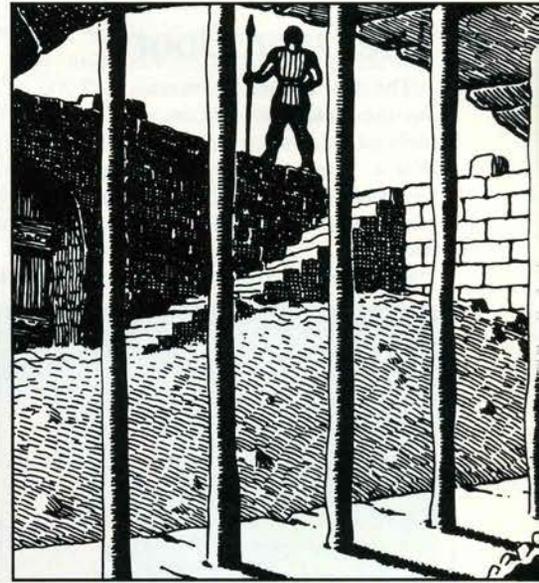


Some 41 churches are located in the United Kingdom and Ireland. (Map by Minette Collins.)

## Old Testament Personalities

# JOSEPH

By Art Ferdig



**J**oseph was Jacob's favorite son, the firstborn of Rachel. He was born while Jacob was still working for Laban, near the end of the second term of seven years (Gen. 29:30).

Young Joseph grew up strong, intelligent and capable. And because of his father's special love for him, jealousy developed between Joseph and his older brothers.

The situation worsened. When Joseph went out to tend the flocks with them, he would report their mischief to his father at the end of the day. As far as his brothers were concerned, Joseph was a "daddy's boy" and a tattletale. But to his father, he was a young man of fine character who was growing daily in respect for the laws and power of God.

Jacob even rewarded him with a beautiful coat, tailor-made from many colorful pieces of cloth. But every time he wore it his brothers were reminded of Jacob's favoritism and only became more annoyed.

Then, to make matters worse, Joseph dreamed that he and his broth-

ers were tying sheaves of grain in the field, and their sheaves bowed down to his sheaf. He was only 17 and didn't have the good sense to keep his thoughts to himself. So he told his brothers the dream, and they hated him all the more (Gen. 37:8).

But then Joseph dreamed another dream — that the sun, moon and 11 stars bowed down to him. He again told it to his brothers and even to his father. Jacob rebuked him, having interpreted the sun and moon to be himself and Joseph's stepmother, Leah. He asked, "Shall I and your mother and your brothers bow down ourselves to you?"

Yet Jacob considered these dreams, for he knew they could be from God. But Joseph's brothers only grew angrier.

### Sold into slavery

One day when Joseph approached his brothers in the field, they conspired to kill him, intending to throw his body into a pit.

But Reuben, the eldest, convinced them to drop Joseph into the pit

unharmful, suggesting there might be a better solution. He actually intended to rescue Joseph later. For Reuben could have used a little goodwill from Jacob, as he had sinned with Bilhah and lost the birthright (Gen. 35:22, 49:4).

Before Reuben could return to help Joseph, however, a caravan of Ishmaelites came by, bound for Egypt. To Judah, this looked like a solution to the problem of Joseph once and for all. So at the prompting of Judah, his brothers sold Joseph as a slave to the Midianite merchants (descendants of Ishmael) for 20 pieces of silver.

When Reuben returned, he tore his clothes in remorse, for he was the eldest, and held accountable.

But the other brothers took Joseph's coat, dipped it in the blood of a young goat and reported to their father that his favorite son had been killed by a wild beast and the coat was all that remained. In anguish, Jacob tore his clothes and wept. He refused comfort from anyone, saying that he would take this sorrow to his

grave. The merchants sold Joseph to Potiphar, an officer of the pharaoh of Egypt. Joseph was well educated, mannerly and strong, and probably brought a fine price. Potiphar was so impressed with him that he gave him a wage and eventually made him overseer of his household.

Joseph was well liked by everyone and respected. It was obvious that God was with him. He even became

trated, but bitter. She fabricated a story about how Joseph attempted to rape her and left his coat in her bedroom. When Potiphar heard the account, he was angry and had Joseph put into the pharaoh's prison.

### The prison years

So Joseph, innocent but without recourse or defense, was consigned to prison. He was a slave and had only

unjust imprisonment and mention his plight before the pharaoh. But the butler, upon his release, forgot to fulfill his promise.

Yet, despite his discouragement and trials, Joseph remained faithful to God. He no doubt prayed often and sought God for strength and patience, knowing that one day God would deliver him, in His own time.

That time came two years later.



Illustrations by Basil Wolverton

somewhat prosperous in the capacity of a slave.

### Potiphar's wife

Over a period of time, Potiphar's wife developed an attraction for Joseph — not so much for the way he managed the household, but for his youthful manhood and good looks.

She began, as the scripture says, to "cast her eyes" on him (Gen. 39:7), and one day tried to seduce him while her husband was away.

But Joseph refused her advances, expressing his loyalty to Potiphar and his respect for God's laws. His rejection, however, only strengthened her resolve. She continued her suggestive proposals until finally Joseph tried to avoid her presence altogether. But one day she grabbed him by the arm and asked him to reconsider her offer, for there were no other servants in the house at the time. Joseph refused again, but when she wouldn't let go of his sleeve, he slipped out of his coat and left the house.

This time she was not only frus-

limited civil rights. Yet God saw his plight and gave him immediate favor with the prison guard. The guard saw that Joseph was well educated and responsible, and eventually he made him overseer of the prisoners.

A few months later, two new inmates were brought in — the pharaoh's chief butler and chief baker. Angry at them both, the pharaoh sent them to prison, where they fell under Joseph's charge.

Not long after this, the two men both had dreams on the same night and were convinced they held some special meaning, but could find no interpreter. When they told Joseph of their dilemma, he explained that the true interpretation of dreams wasn't possible without the help of his God, the only true God.

They recounted their dreams, and God gave Joseph the meanings: The butler would be restored to his place in the pharaoh's house within three days, but the baker, after three days, would be slain.

Joseph asked, as a personal favor, that the butler remember him and his

Pharaoh himself dreamed a dream (Gen. 41:1). In fact, he dreamed twice the same night. And the dreams were so vivid and unusual that he called in his wise men and magicians for an interpretation.

### Pharaoh's dream

He told them what he saw: Seven fat cattle came up out of the Nile and stood eating in the meadow. Then seven lean cattle came up out of the river and devoured the fat cattle, but they still remained thin. And later he dreamed that seven fat, full ears of corn came out on one stalk, and then seven thin and dry ears sprung out and devoured the fat ears.

Pharaoh waited for the interpretation, but his magicians and seers were unable to tell him what the dreams meant.

Then the chief butler remembered Joseph and told the pharaoh how he had interpreted his dream while in prison. This was an answer to many agonizing hours of prayer, for Joseph was finally brought out of prison to appear before the pha-

raoh. Joseph again gave God the credit for his ability, saying that of himself he was helpless to know the interpretation — that it must come from God.

He explained that both dreams referred to the same thing. There would be seven years of plenty, followed by seven years of grievous famine. Joseph suggested that officers be appointed over the land to set aside 20 percent of the harvests during the seven years of plenty, to prepare for the years of famine.

Pharaoh was impressed. He put Joseph in charge of all preparations, and also made him head of his household — second in command throughout all Egypt. What a remarkable turn of events! God raised Joseph from lowly prisoner to mighty ruler of Egypt in one day.

Among Joseph's other blessings was a wife, a gift of the pharaoh. Her name was Asenath, and she was the daughter of a priest of On (quite possibly a priestly order that worshiped the true God, for there were still some in Egypt who respected God's laws). During the years of plenty, she bore him two sons. The first he named Manasseh, which means "forgetting," because he had forgotten his troubles and the ill treatment by his brothers. The second son he named Ephraim, meaning "fruitful," because God had given him so many blessings.

During those years God also abundantly blessed the harvests of Egypt. But after the seventh year passed, the waters of the Nile no longer overflowed the banks, and the famine began — not only in Egypt, but throughout the surrounding countries as well.

### **Joseph sees his brothers**

Now an episode in Joseph's life clearly showed what God had in mind all along — bringing Jacob's descendants (Israel) into Egypt to build them into a nation. God used the famine to get the move started, for the dearth was so severe in Canaan that Jacob was finally forced to send his sons (except Benjamin) to Egypt for food.

The account of their unwitting reunion with Joseph after 22 years and the dramatic, emotion-charged series of events that followed is cov-

ered in great detail in Genesis 42-45. Joseph chose to hide his true identity, and his brothers were brought to a point of exasperation, bewilderment and eventually even humility.

They were brought to their knees before him, as God had long ago shown Joseph in prophetic dreams.

The intrigue finally ended when Benjamin was brought to Egypt on the second trip. This encounter, especially Judah's humble and heartfelt plea on behalf of Benjamin (Gen. 44:18-34), so moved Joseph with emotion that he broke down and told them who he was.

They were astonished, speechless and terrified for their lives.

But Joseph told them not to be alarmed and explained he was in Egypt by God's will — not by their malice — to save the entire family from famine. For there were five years of severe famine left. He then told them that Jacob and his whole household should immediately come down to Egypt and establish themselves in Goshen.

He now spoke directly to them in the Hebrew tongue, not through an interpreter as before. And they finally believed he was their brother. Embracing and weeping, they talked well into the night.

Pharaoh, hearing Joseph's brothers had come to Egypt, was especially pleased. He sent an invitation for them to bring their families and settle in some of Egypt's best land. He even provided wagons to move their wives and little ones and told Joseph that he would absorb the costs.

Joseph gave his brothers each a change of fine clothing, but gave Benjamin, his only full brother, five sets of clothing and 300 pieces of silver. Then he loaded 20 donkeys with gifts and food for his father so there would be plenty to eat during their return trip.

He sent them on their way with a warning not to disagree among themselves or change their minds about returning to Egypt. For he knew they were fearful of explaining to Jacob how they had lied to him and actually sold Joseph into slavery.

### **Israel comes to Egypt**

When Jacob heard that Joseph was somehow alive and governor

over all Egypt, he fainted in shock and disbelief. But when they recited the whole story of what had happened and showed him the gifts and wagons, he finally believed them. This was evidence enough, and he was determined to go to Egypt to see his son.

So his entire household — sons, daughters, grandchildren, servants, cattle and goods — left Canaan and traveled south. Sixty-six blood descendants of Jacob made the trip to Egypt. Here, in a joyous reunion, Jacob was reacquainted with a son he thought dead.

The children of Israel were given the best land of Egypt — the land of Goshen — according to the commandment of the pharaoh. And Joseph provided them with food, for the famine was now very severe.

After the famine the Israelites stayed in Goshen, and Jacob lived out his last days near Joseph. He spent a total of 17 years in Egypt. And in his old age he blessed his sons and Manasseh and Ephraim, the sons of Joseph. Upon death, he was taken by a great procession out of Egypt and buried in Hebron.

But Joseph's brothers were still fearful that Joseph might punish them for selling him into slavery, especially now that their father was dead. They asked his forgiveness, saying this was at the behest of Jacob before he died.

Joseph wept when he heard their request. And when they came and bowed down before him, again a fulfillment of his dreams as a youth, he told them not to be afraid, for it wasn't his duty to judge them for their actions. God, after all, had directed the entire course of events for the good.

Joseph lived to be 110 years old and saw the family of Israel grow into a small, prosperous nation of people. But before he died, he prophesied that the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob would one day call their nation out of Egypt to take them to the land of promise, according to His covenant. And he made them swear to take his bones up out of Egypt with them.

At death he was embalmed and placed in a coffin to await the exodus. It came, under Moses, about 170 years later. □

# The Feast of Tabernacles and the Millennium in History

By Lester L. Grabbe

**A**s a member of God's Church you are already familiar with the biblical passages concerning God's millennial Kingdom. However, you may not be aware of the many commentaries about the Millennium and the Feast of Tabernacles found in extrabiblical writings from both the Jews and early Christian fathers.

In the long centuries between the Old and New Testaments, Jewish writings often described God's Kingdom on earth. Similarly, the early Christian church fathers frequently mention a 1,000-year rule of Christ on this physical planet. Belief in the Millennium was almost universal, even among Catholics.

## The record of Papias

One of the earliest figures we know of outside the New Testament was Papias. He was said to have been an elder in the church at Hierapolis in Asia Minor and to have known the apostle John. Not long after the book of Revelation was written, Papias, one of the early church fathers, attempted to collect all the sayings attributed to Jesus and put them in a five-volume work. One of these alleged sayings is this:

"The days will come when vineyards shall grow each with ten thousand vines, and on one vine ten thousand branches, and on one branch ten thousand shoots, and on every shoot ten thousand clusters, and in every cluster ten thousand grapes, and every grape when pressed will give twenty-five measures of wine; and when one of the saints grasps a cluster, another cluster will cry out: 'I am better, take me, bless the Lord on my account.'"

This saying is *not* from Jesus, contrary to what Papias thought, but shows a current belief. Actually, the belief in God's Kingdom on earth had been expressed in Jewish literature long before the time of Papias. One writing, which probably dates before 200 B.C., states:

"And in those days the whole earth will be tilled in righteousness, and all of it will be planted with trees, and it will be filled with blessing. And all pleasant trees they will plant on it, and they will plant on it vines, and the vine which is planted on it will produce fruit in abundance; and every seed which is sown on it, each measure will produce a thousand, and each measure of olives will produce ten baths of oil" (*Eth. En.* 10:18-19).

## Jewish beliefs

The tradition of the coming Kingdom of God on earth was strong in Jewish literature before and during the first century A.D. One Jewish writing, which dates from about 150 B.C., is essentially a paraphrase of Genesis but has a small section on the coming Kingdom:

"And in those days the children will begin to study the laws, and to seek the commandments, and to return to the path of righteousness. And the days will begin to grow many and increase among those children of men, till their days draw nigh to one thousand years, and to a greater number of years than before was the number of the days. And there will be no old man nor one who is not satisfied with his days, for all will be as children and youths. And all their days they will complete and live in peace and in joy, and there will be no Satan

nor any evil destroyer" (*Jub.* 23:26-29).

Not surprisingly, these Jewish works often use language reminiscent of the Old Testament. But some of them were written to be read by the pagan Greeks and Romans and often took on the language of the Hellenistic oracles, since this commanded more attention. Yet even then, we still find reflections of the biblical statements. From about the middle of the second century B.C. we read:

"For Earth the universal mother shall give to mortals her best fruit in countless store of corn, wine and oil. Yea, from heaven shall come a sweet draught of luscious honey, the trees shall yield their proper fruits, and rich flocks. . . . And the cities shall be full of good things and the fields rich: neither shall there be any sword throughout the land nor battle din: nor shall the earth be convulsed any more with deep-drawn groans" (*3 Sib. Orac.* 744-52).

The Jewish people as a whole did not accept Jesus as the promised Messiah. But even after the disastrous war with Rome in 66-70, many continued to hope in a messiah who would usher in God's Kingdom.

About A.D. 100 one writer envisioned a messiah who would bring an age of peace but then be killed, after which God would cause the resurrection and final judgment (*Apoc. Ezra* 7:26-44). Another writing shortly after this, however, is closer to biblical teachings:

"And it shall come to pass when all is accomplished that was to come to pass in those parts, that the Messiah shall then begin to be revealed. . . . The earth also shall yield its fruit ten thousandfold. . . . And those who

have hungered shall rejoice: moreover, also, they shall behold marvels every day. For winds shall go forth from before me to bring every morning the fragrance of aromatic fruits, and at the close of the day clouds distilling the dew of health. . . . And it shall come to pass after these things, when the time of the advent of the Messiah is fulfilled, that He shall return in glory. Then all who have fallen asleep in hope of Him shall rise again" (*Apoc. Bar.* 29-30).

### The Catholic view

Justin Martyr, a Catholic, referred to many Catholic beliefs, such as worship on Sunday, when he wrote about A.D. 150. Yet Justin held a strong belief in the Millennium. In his *Dialogue with Trypho* 80, he writes:

"If you have ever encountered any so-called Christians who do not admit this doctrine [of the Millennium], but dare to blaspheme the God of Abraham and the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob by asserting that there is no resurrection of the dead, but that their souls are taken up to heaven at the very moment of their death, do not consider them to be real Christians. . . . But I and every other completely orthodox Christian feel certain that there will be a resurrection of the flesh, followed by a thousand years in the rebuilt, embellished, and enlarged city of Jerusalem, as was announced by the prophets Ezechiel, Isaiah, and the others."

Toward the end of the second century, Irenaeus, the bishop of Lyons, also wrote on the subject. In his youth, he had heard Polycarp preach. In his work, *Against All Heresies*, he refers to the Millennium in a number of passages. He writes, "For in as many days as this world was made, in so many thousand years shall it be concluded" (5.28.3). After citing various prophecies about the Kingdom on earth (5.34.1-4), he notes that these prophecies are to be taken literally (5.35.1).

Hippolytus of Rome, in the early third century, wrote a commentary on the book of Daniel. Like so many others, he believed God would intervene after 6,000 years of human history: "And 6,000 years must needs be accomplished, in order that the Sab-

bath may come. . . . For the Sabbath is the type and emblem of the future kingdom of the saints, when they 'shall reign with Christ,' when He comes from heaven, as John says in his Apocalypse" (4.23).

In the late third century, Victorinus of Pannonia wrote a commentary on Revelation in which he shows his acceptance of the Millennium. Elsewhere he similarly writes, "Wherefore, as I have narrated, that true Sabbath will be in the seventh millenary of years, when Christ with his elect shall reign" (*De fab. mun.*).

### Anti-Millennium concepts

Belief in the Millennium was practically universal in the second century, though some did not accept it. But by the early third century, opposition had begun to mount.

The archheretic Marcion of the second century rejected any literal interpretation of Revelation 20 (Tertullian, *C. Marc.* 3.24). In the third century the widely influential Origen of Alexandria castigated the idea of a rule of Christ and the saints on a physical earth (*De princ.* 2.11.2).

By the fourth century, belief in the Millennium was more criticized than accepted. Granted, such writers as Victorinus still believed it. But church historian Eusebius wrote against millennial teachings and presented millenarians such as Papias in a poor light in his ecclesiastical history.

By the end of the fourth century, the Millennium had become a mere vestige in the Catholic church. Jerome even made a new edition of Victorinus' commentary on Revelation, in which he edited out all millennial teachings! Augustine, who set the standard of Catholic thought for centuries, wrote in his *City of God* 20.7.1:

"But, as they assert that those who then rise again shall enjoy the leisure of immoderate carnal banquets, furnished with an amount of meat and drink such as not only to shock the feeling of the temperate, but even to surpass the measure of credulity itself, such assertions can be believed only by the carnal."

### Tabernacles a type

Jerome heaped scorn on those who looked forward to 1,000 years

on earth and called them Judaizers. But he also noted that the Jews celebrated the Feast of Tabernacles as a type of the 1,000-year Messianic Kingdom. In a comment on Zechariah 14, he writes (*Comm. in Zach.* 625-31):

"He says, all who are left of the nations who came against Jerusalem will come up once a year to worship the King, the Lord of Hosts, and to celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles. The Jews look forward to these things also with a vain future hope in a reign of 1,000 years, of which the celebration is itself a beginning."

But perhaps the most telling explanation of the Feast of Tabernacles is that of Methodius, who died A.D. 311. He points out that plant products used to build the booths symbolize the resurrection and the celebration of the spiritual Feast in the Millennium (236). The fact that the Feast is in the seventh month represents the great day of the resurrection (238). Later he comments:

"For they only who have celebrated the Feast of Tabernacles come to the Holy Land, setting out from those dwellings which are called tabernacles, until they come to enter into the temple and city of God, advancing to a greater and more glorious joy, as the Jewish types indicate. . . . For I also, taking my journey and going forth from the Egypt of this life, came first to the resurrection which is the true Feast of Tabernacles, and there having set up my tabernacle, adorned with the fruits of virtue, on the first day of the resurrection, which is the day of judgment, celebrate with Christ the Millennium of rest, which is called the seventh day, even the true Sabbath" (253-4).

Methodius was a Catholic and certainly did not keep the Feast. Nevertheless, he recognized, albeit confusedly, that there is basic spiritual significance to the Festival.

How much more we who have God's Spirit and hear the Words of God! God's Church knows the purpose and deep spiritual meaning of the Feast. As we keep it, we look forward to the time God Himself — in the person of Jesus Christ — will rule over the earth. □

# MINI STUDY

## What Is a Real Christian?

Prepared by Richard H. Sedliacik

CONVERSION

What is a *real* Christian? Could you give the Bible definition?

Jesus gave us the very basis of real Christianity in what is commonly called the Sermon on the Mount found in Matthew, chapters 5 through 7. He pointed out those characteristics, often called beatitudes, which would clearly identify His true followers.

Before we pick up the story in Matthew 5 and focus on several of these Christian characteristics, you should read the entirety of chapters 5, 6 and 7.

1. What did Jesus say about the poor in spirit? Matt. 5:3. When He spoke of the "poor in spirit," did He mean they would lack the Spirit of God? Rom. 8:9; Luke 11:13.

No, Jesus wasn't suggesting that the "poor in spirit" would be lacking God's Holy Spirit, as did the five foolish virgins in the parable of Matthew 25. Rather, He went on to show that those who are truly humble in attitude of mind are blessed because they will be in God's Kingdom.

2. What are the meek in Christ destined to inherit in addition to being born into God's Kingdom? Matt. 5:5. Was Jesus meek? Matt. 11:29. Will a real Christian exhibit meekness in the way he conducts his daily life? Eph. 4:1-2.

There is a difference between being meek and being weak. Jesus was meek but not weak! He endured abuse and injury with patience and without resentment. He didn't deliberately try to stir up arguments and trouble.

A meek person will not try to justify the self when wrong. Neither is he revengeful. And he certainly does not feel superior to others.

3. What will a true follower of Christ — a real Christian — be "thirsting" for? Matt. 5:6. What is the Bible definition of "righteousness"? Ps. 119:172.

To "hunger and thirst" for righteousness is to be deeply motivated to obey God — to keep His laws, which are given to us in loving concern for our own good.

Those who are truly hungering and thirsting for righteousness will be studying for true understanding, and will be willing to change when they

see they've been wrong, admitting their wrong beliefs, their mistakes, their sins. "Study to shew thyself approved unto God" is the apostle Paul's admonition to Timothy and to all Christians (II Tim. 2:15). "Prove all things" said Paul to the Thessalonians and to all of us today (I Thess. 5:21).

4. Who did Paul say are justified before God — the *hearers* or the *doers* of God's law? Rom. 2:13. Did Paul make it plain that even though the unmerited pardon of our sins is by the *grace* of God through faith in Christ's sacrifice, nevertheless a Christian is still obligated to God to keep His law? Read Romans 3:31 and all of chapter 6.

5. Who did Jesus say will enter the Kingdom of God? Matt. 7:21. What did the apostle Paul plainly say was *most important* for a Christian to be doing? I Cor. 7:19.

Notice that in order to enter God's Kingdom there is *doing* required — not only the confession of Christ as our Savior. God is also very much concerned about our spiritual "works" after becoming Christians. He plainly states that we cannot make it into the Family of God by just sitting back and thinking Christ has done it all for us!

6. Unless we have the love of God, can we really be a Christian? Read all of I Corinthians 13. (The word *charity* in the King James translation means love). What are we if we lack the love of God? Verse 2.

7. Will God's love, which He imparts through His Spirit (Gal. 5:22), lead one to keep His Ten Commandments — *all* 10 of them? Rom. 13:8-10. In what way did God inspire John to confirm Paul's statement — what is the Bible definition of God's love? I John 5:2-3. How is God's love perfected in one? I John 2:5.

8. Is a real Christian one who strives to follow Christ — to imitate His example — to "walk" with Him? I Pet. 2:21; I John 2:6.

9. Who is one of the first men in the Bible who "walked" with God? Gen. 5:22-24. What else are we told about Enoch? Heb. 11:5, last part. Will he be in the resurrection? Heb. 11:13, 39-40.

10. What other great patriarch walked with God? Gen. 6:9. Did Noah therefore find grace in

# MINISTUDY

God's sight? Verse 8. Was Noah clearly a faithful and righteous man, pleasing before God? Heb. 11:7.

**11.** What was God's command to Abraham? Gen. 17:1. Why could it be said that he did indeed walk with God? Gen. 26:5; Heb. 11:8-10.

**12.** Was Abraham consequently the *friend* of God? II Chron. 20:7; Isa. 41:8; Jas. 2:23. How can we become Christ's friends? John 15:14-15.

**13.** Did God especially command His Church in the wilderness (Acts 7:38) — the nation of Israel — to walk in His ways; that is, to obey His laws? Deut. 5:32-33; 8:6; 10:12; 11:22; 13:4; 26:17-18; 28:9.

**14.** Did God promise to walk with them if they walked with Him? Lev. 26:3, 12. Would He greatly bless them if they walked with Him? Verses 4-11.

**15.** But if the people of Israel chose to walk contrary to God — refused to walk in His ways — what did God say would happen to them? Lev. 26:14-39.

To "walk with God" clearly means to obey His commandments and laws, and to do those things that are pleasing in His sight. It is the only way to really be a Christian!

**16.** What will be a real Christian's attitude toward the sinning society around him? I John 2:15-17; I Pet. 4:1-4; Rev. 18:4. What will he rather be striving to live by? Matt. 4:4.

A real Christian will no longer be able to conscientiously follow all the customs and practices of the society around him. Where he formerly "went along with the crowd," thoughtlessly indulging in various social activities and business practices, he will now begin to seriously question his lifestyle. He will begin asking: "What is God's will? How does God say I should live?" He will begin saying, with Christ, "Nevertheless not *my* will, but *thine*, be done." And he will be diligently searching the Bible to learn the will of God, and following it.

Of course, God's people must live in this world (John 17:15-16). And while striving to fully obey God — not being conformed to this world's ways (Rom. 12:1-2) — they should strive to "live peaceably with all men" (verse 18). And if a Christian has to disagree because of biblical teaching, he does so without being disagreeable or self-righteous about it.

**17.** What further responsibility do Christians have toward the world? Matt. 5:14-16.

While not "of the world" in the sense that Christ meant, those men and women of God having the Holy Spirit and a knowledge of His truth

and abundant way of life have a responsibility to be bright "lights" in the world. Far from just "quietly glowing" like a 25-watt light bulb, or hiding their light "under a bushel," God's people should be exhibiting the "fruit," or characteristics, of God's Holy Spirit within them (Gal. 5:22-23).

Each one can reach out with friendliness and with a helping hand toward his neighbors and those he comes in contact with every day. People not as yet called of God will be encouraged as they witness some of the mind and character of God in action through the living example set by individual Christians.

**18.** What steps has a real Christian already taken to be recognized by God as one of His children? Acts 2:38. What has God bestowed upon him as a free and unearned gift according to his willing obedience? Same verse and Acts 5:32. ("Holy Ghost" is an archaic rendering in the King James Version and should rather read "Holy Spirit.")

A real Christian has been conquered by God. His "carnal," antagonistic attitude toward God (Rom. 8:7-8) is now broken. He came to realize he had sinned against God, having broken His holy, righteous law (I John 3:4). Therefore he cried out to God and asked His forgiveness for those sins through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, and a lifting of the death penalty that every sin incurs (Rom. 6:23). Then he submitted to the ordinance of baptism that illustrated to God his deep sincerity.

And as he expected God to stand behind His promise to beget him spiritually by the Holy Spirit, as a result of his repentance, baptism and the laying on of hands, he was indeed imbued by the Spirit of the Father and became a spiritually begotten child of God. It was *then* that he became a *real* Christian!

**19.** Can one be a true Christian without having the Holy Spirit of God? Rom. 8:9-10.

**20.** What does God call the person who claims to "know" Christ, who says he is a Christian, but refuses to walk in His ways — refuses to keep His commandments? I John 2:4. What will the one who is indeed a real Christian actually be doing? Verses 3, 5-6.

A real Christian has sincerely repented of his sins and is striving, with the help of the Holy Spirit, to live by his Savior's teachings. He is walking with God, seeking to do His will in every aspect of his life. And he is becoming a recipient of the happiness and blessings that come with obedience to God! □

# They Did Not Look Back!

By Kenneth C. Herrmann

*Lot's daughters made some truly astonishing choices. They believed God's warning, they left the condemned city of Sodom, they relied on angelic protection and they turned their backs on their betrothed. And they did not look back!*

**M**ost people are familiar with the story of Lot's wife. "Why, she's the one God turned into a pillar of salt!" you might quickly say. Your talk may then shift to whether it was a literal pillar of salt or just a figure of speech. You might mention that various tourists reported sighting pillars of salt in the area in the early centuries A.D. You could express skepticism as to whether any one of them was, after 19 centuries, the actual remains of Lot's wife.

But you would be missing the important points in the story of Lot's escape from Sodom before that city's destruction. True, we are to remember Lot's wife, but it is vital to read the whole story (Gen. 19) and remember also the example of those *who did not look back*.

## **A chance to escape**

Lot's wife had a chance to leave wicked Sodom under the protection of angels and in the company of a righteous husband. Yet, upon reaching the village of Zoar, she turned and looked back (verse 26). It cost her her life.

Lot's wife looked back to a city whose ways caused anguish, sorrow and crying that reached into the heavens. She apparently had left behind something of value — at least of value to her. Commentators suggest that she even hurried back — but only to be overwhelmed with a rain of fire, salt and sulfur. God's destruction snuffed out the crying of that city.

But now consider the daughters of

Lot. They, too, had to decide what was important to them. They were being given a chance to leave a city that may have been the place of their birth with a father who had, the evening before, offered them to a depraved mob (verse 8) and a mother who would soon turn back.

But more. Verse 14 speaks of Lot's "sons in law." According to Josephus, Lot's daughters had been betrothed to two men, although they were probably not married yet (*Antiquities*, Book I, Chapter XI, Section 4). Lot's daughters were faced with a choice. They had to decide whether to trust the angels' message proclaimed by their father or remain with their chosen husbands, who preferred the company of the wicked. And, courageously, they made the right decision.

"Oh, yes," you might say. "But these were awful girls who got their father drunk and then committed sexual sins with him. Why, they should have been left in Sodom with the rest of the wicked." But if this is your attitude, you are still missing the important points of the story.

## **Separate the wheat from the chaff**

A once-a-year treat for wheat growers is to step out into fields nearly ready for harvesting and pluck a few ears of wheat. Quickly rubbing the wheat in your hands frees the husks from the kernels.

These soft berries of wheat (or other grains) require no cooking; they can be eaten right in the field. Jesus and his disciples "went on the

sabbath day through the corn [barley]; and his disciples were an hungered, and began to pluck the ears of corn, and to eat" (Matt. 12:1). They obtained some excellent food with a minimum of effort that in no way broke the intent of the Sabbath.

But suppose you saw someone deliberately picking the chaff from the wheat in his hands — completely ignoring the wheat and examining each bit of chaff with the greatest of care? Then suppose you saw him toss away the wheat, trample it underfoot and keep the chaff? Wouldn't you question his taste? Likewise, you can question the judgment of those who pick at the character flaws of biblical heroes and heroines and miss out on the important examples placed in God's Word for our learning.

Lot's daughters were among those biblical heroines.

## **Other daughters of Lot**

The modern nation of Jordan is descended from Moab and Ammon, the two "sons" of Lot by his daughters. The capital of Jordan is even named Amman. Moab's descendants are compared in Jeremiah 48:11 to a bottle of wine that has been allowed to age without ever being disturbed, a bottle whose "lees" have settled to the bottom.

The descendants of Moab and Ammon inherited the conservative nature of their father Lot. They were, so to speak, hesitant homebodies rather than adventuresome pioneers. They continue to this day in the land of their ancestors. But while most descendants of Lot exhibit this seden-

tary nature, note the contrast in the traits of Ruth and Rahab, also two later daughters of Lot.

Ruth, a young Moabite widow, turned her back on her society and its god, Chemosh, whom the people placated with human sacrifices. Listen to Ruth's plea to Naomi, who taught her of Israel's God. "Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return . . . thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God . . . the Lord do so to me . . . if aught but death part thee and me" (Ruth 1:16-17). She chose Naomi's God and turned her back on a pagan deity.

In the resurrection, Lot's daughters can look with pride at this distant daughter of theirs who joined them in choosing Abraham's God. One would suppose that the descendants of Moab and Ammon intermarried, and thus both girls might claim Ruth as a descendant.

Lot's daughters can also hear and approve of Ruth's marriage to Boaz, the son of Salmon, and a girl from Jericho named Rahab. Rahab likewise turned her back on an evil city and its ways. She also chose to believe that Israel's God would forgive and protect those who turned to Him, and that He would just as surely destroy Jericho as he had Egypt, Sodom and Gomorrah.

Yet to this day, people habitually think of this biblical heroine only as "Rahab the harlot." In reality Salmon, an Israelite perhaps born during the 40 years of wandering, chose a courageous woman for his wife.

Their son, Boaz, decades later quickly recognized Ruth's unusual character traits. And these two provided Naomi with a son when she was too old to marry and replace her sons who died childless in Moab. Obed, Naomi's "son," was the father of Jesse, and Jesse was the father of King David (Ruth 4:14-22).

Here were more outstanding women who walked away from evil and chose righteousness.

### Chosen "sixes"

Noah's three sons and their wives repopulated the world in the post-Flood era. In the company of Noah and his wife, these six were spared from a watery demise that engulfed all else. And it was these six who carried out the command, "Be fruit-

ful, and multiply, and replenish the earth" (Gen. 9:1).

Centuries later, it was again six individuals who were given the opportunity to leave Sodom: Lot, his wife, their two daughters and their fiancés. "And Lot went out, and spake unto his sons in law, which married his daughters, and said, Up, get you out of this place . . . But he seemed as one that mocked unto his sons in law" (Gen. 19:14).

The angels took the four who, however reluctantly, would come, and led them out of the city. Six had been selected for the escape, but only four participated and arrived at Zoar. Lot's wife looked back and then there were three.

Count the generations from Adam through Shem and his brothers. Shem was the 11th generation. To those six survivors of the Flood was given the commission, "Be fruitful, and multiply," and a promise, "I will establish my covenant with you; neither shall all flesh be cut off any more by the waters of a flood" (Gen. 9:11). God told them not to fear living in the lowlands or building cities by the seashore. They were to leave Ararat, go down to the plain and begin the human race again.

Continue to count generations from Shem to Lot's daughters; Lot's daughters were the 22nd generation. Was another worldwide devastation, but of a different type, about to occur to again end man's violence?

Eleven generations had now passed since the Flood. In a fertile valley where life could have been pleasant with a minimum of hard labor, wickedness had once more permeated society. Lot and his family were offered a chance to escape.

The rescue of these six from Sodom went awry, and three were left behind dead. Half were taken and half were left. The message of Sodom and Gomorrah is for the end-time generation. Entire cities could be destroyed without survivors if nuclear war breaks out (Isa. 6:9-12).

### A dilemma

Now reread the account of Lot and his two daughters. Chosen to survive, they found themselves in a cave in the mountains above the poisonous sulphur fumes of the valley. They must have wondered whether the entire

world had been destroyed. Were only the three of them left of all mankind? Or had only this area of the world — their own family — been involved?

Look once more at the statement of the firstborn, "Our father is old, and *there is not a man in the earth* to come in unto us after the manner of all the earth" (Gen. 19:31). If the two girls believed all others on earth were dead, then they and their father alone remained.

On the other hand, if only their area and their segment of the human family were involved in the disaster, then they were still left alone. Inter-marriage with other branches of mankind was expressly forbidden and thwarted by God when he scattered humanity at the Tower of Babel.

Had Uncle Abraham and Aunt Sarah also been wiped out? Lot's daughters must have seen Abraham waver in faith on occasion. Had God now given up on Abraham and turned instead to Lot? The girls knew their father was a righteous man. Angels specifically picked their father Lot and all who would go with him, just as 11 generations earlier Noah and his wife and their three sons were chosen from all others.

### Life must go on

In view of these events, the elder of Lot's daughters said, in effect, to the younger: "We were chosen from an evil generation, spared from the destruction we see everywhere. Our husbands are dead and we have an obligation to raise up sons for them. Our father Lot is a righteous man and he is old. If our father should die, the human race could come to an end with our own deaths as widows. Or, even if other segments of the human race have survived, intermarriage with them is forbidden."

It was in this context that Lot's daughters chose to preserve their father's line and raise up sons for their own dead husbands.

Why judge the daughters of Lot so harshly? What they did was wrong, yet their lives to this point were a witness to their fiancés and to the surrounding community. Their intention was to carry on with the commission to refill the earth with obedient, God-fearing people. Their shortcomings and their names are covered. □

# PROVE ALL THINGS

## Be Ready Always to Give an Answer

*"... be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear" (1 Peter 3:15).*

By Clayton Steep

**W**hat was Jesus — the Son of God — like as a human being? It may come as a surprise to some that the sad, long-haired, weak-looking Jesus portrayed in most churches with a white robe and a halo is not the Jesus of the Bible. The pictures and statues depict "another Jesus" (II Cor. 11:4)!

There is no single passage of Scripture giving a complete description of Jesus the man. But many scattered verses allow us glimpses of Him as He really was. Here is a list of several such verses. Be sure to look them up in your own Bible. Analyze them and ask yourself if you have envisioned Jesus as He really was.

Jesus was not especially handsome (Isa. 53:2). He could walk right through a crowd without being recognized (Luke 4:30). Judas had to point Him out with a kiss (Matt. 26:48-49). His hair was short (I Cor. 11:14), but there is a possibility He had a beard (Isa. 50:6).

Jesus was the elder brother to several younger brothers and sisters (Matt. 13:55-56). As a child He was exceptionally bright (Luke 2:46-47); as an adult He amazed the scholars of His day (John 7:15).

He was no physical weakling. Since Jesus was a carpenter (Mark 6:3), His hands must have been calloused and His shoulders big. As there were no electric tools back then, sawing and drilling were done by hand. This was hard work. A physically weak person could not survive the Roman scourge (Mark 15:15), or fast for 40 days and then go on to win the most decisive battle of all time (Matt. 4:1-11).

Jesus had His own house in Capernaum — a house large enough that He could entertain a lot of people

(Mark 2:15). Being a carpenter, He could have built it Himself.

Jesus was familiar with the ways of wild animals and plants (Matt. 6:26-30), as well as the principles of agriculture (Matt. 13:1-43) and caring for domestic animals (John 10:1-5; Luke 13:15, 14:5). By observing the elements, He knew what kind of weather to expect (Matt. 16:2-3).

Tanned by the Judean sun, Jesus was accustomed to walking long distances until He was sweaty and thirsty and weary (John 4:6-7). There were no doubt times when it was necessary during His travels to sleep out under the stars or wherever shelter could be found (Matt. 8:20).

Those who imagine only a "gentle Jesus, meek and mild" have forgotten how He twice chased the money changers out of the Temple (John 2:13-17, Mark 11:15-17). Dumping their money on the floor, He pushed over their tables and upset their chairs. While the flabbergasted money changers scrambled to get out of His way, Jesus used a small whip to drive out the frightened oxen and bleating sheep.

The same eyes in which the money changers saw the fire of righteous anger flash (John 2:17) overflowed on other occasions with tears of tenderness and sorrow (John 11:35, Isa. 53:3). Jesus was full of compassion (Matt. 9:36). He was fond of children (Mark 10:15-16), and children were fond of Him (Matt. 21:15). He loved to be with people (Mark 6:34, Luke 9:11) and to serve them (Acts 10:38). But He always managed to get away by Himself so He could maintain contact with His Father in heaven (Matt. 14:22-23).

Jesus understood the poor (Luke 21:1-4) and the rich (Luke 12:13-34). He comprehended the problems

of the laborer as well as the employer (Matt. 20:1-16). He knew the true principles of economics and how to handle wealth (Matt. 23:23, Luke 19:12-26). And He paid taxes, too (Matt. 17:24-25, 22:17-21)!

Jesus ate with publicans and sinners (Matt. 9:10-11) and with Pharisees (Luke 7:36). He knew how to conduct Himself in any social situation. He dressed well. His clothing was of such value that Roman soldiers gambled for it (Matt. 27:35).

It was at a wedding celebration of a well-to-do family that Jesus did His first miracle. They had drunk all the wine. So Jesus changed water into more wine — perhaps 100 to 150 gallons of it (John 2:1-11)! Jesus enjoyed good food and good drink (Luke 7:33-34). But He always exercised perfect self-control.

Jesus had a powerfully loud voice that could be heard by multitudes long before microphones were invented (Matt. 15:10). When it was appropriate He spoke with a note of humor (Luke 13:32, Mark 3:17). He loved life and lived it abundantly. But He never let anything or anybody interfere with proclaiming the Gospel of the Kingdom of God and doing His Father's will (Matt. 6:33, John 15:10).

Jesus of Nazareth — God in the flesh — a Teacher, a dependable Friend, a warm, well-balanced, dynamic Person.

Priests, harlots, businessmen, lepers, children, Roman soldiers, Jews, Samaritans, widows, rulers of the synagogue, sinners — He was loved by some, hated by some, feared by some, respected by all. In every circumstance of His jam-packed and varied life He obeyed the laws of His Father, setting us an example. □

# PERSONAL

(Continued from page 1)

would have chosen, the lad David. "He is the one I have chosen," said God. "The ETERNAL sees not as man sees; for man looks on the outward appearance, but the ETERNAL looks on the heart."

Man does not see things *the way* God does. God says, "There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of DEATH" (Prov. 14:12)! As to how MAN looks at it — how MAN would choose, God says, "Lean not unto *thine own* understanding" (Prov. 3:5).

How did GOD prepare the one HE had chosen to lead YOU — His Church of our time? I had to learn and *admit* that what I believed was ALL WRONG! I had to *give up* MY ideas, beliefs, opinions and ways. I had to allow God to *sweep my mind clean*, so HE could fill it with HIS Truth.

Now IF this truly IS the Church of GOD and not of THE PEOPLE — if GOD is not only very much IN the picture — but FIRST and AT THE HEAD of it — UPPERMOST in our minds — then HOW does GOD run or operate it? HOW did He raise up this generation or succession of it? Just as God ALWAYS has done when raising up anything through humans. How is that?

All of God's calling and election of humans in His great overall SPIRITUAL PURPOSE FOR MAN, started with ONE MAN — Abraham. All the promises, both material, national and spiritual, were made to and come to us through Abraham — promises passed on to Isaac and Jacob who with Abraham became "the fathers."

When God decided to call a certain group of humans to be His people — His congregation or CHURCH of the Old Testament, He chose to lead them ONE MAN, specially prepared and trained for the purpose — MOSES! God freed the Israelite slaves — made them HIS NATION, His CONGREGATION of Old Testament Church. WHO really led them? GOD did! By supernatural miracles God took them across the Red Sea. But the people were led by God's chosen, MOSES! They did not SEE God — they

only saw the leader GOD chose — Moses. GOD led them, through Moses.

They became organized. Some were put in positions over 50 people. Some over a hundred — some over a thousand. Among them were some who had been elevated quite high in the organization — men of renown — just as in the Worldwide Church of God today we have had men in comparatively high office — "men of renown." I do not need to print their names — you know who they were.

But GOD SAYS: "Now Korah . . . and Dathan and Abiram . . . and On . . . rose up before Moses, with . . . two hundred and fifty princes of the assembly [Church], famous in the congregation [Church], men of renown: And they gathered themselves together against Moses . . . and said . . . Ye take too much upon you . . . wherefore then lift ye up yourselves above the congregation [Church] . . . ?" (Num. 16:1-3).

Now through Moses, God had given them important offices in the OLD TESTAMENT Church — they were "men of renown." But they wanted more — they coveted Moses' seat! They wanted to be chief boss! They coveted more power!

In 1974 men of renown, in reasonably high position in GOD'S CHURCH of our time, coveted MORE POWER and AUTHORITY. I quoted the above to them about Korah. IT MADE NO DIFFERENCE. They conspired to *take over* headship of the Church — to depose Christ's chosen apostle. They had two men — vice-presidents and of evangelist rank — men in high position — men of renown — at headquarters. They thought that with these high-up men at headquarters they could pull a coup — a POLITICAL REVOLUTION — and the GOVERNMENT in the Church would cave in under their politically conspired plot.

But they UNDERESTIMATED the REAL HEAD of the Church — Jesus Christ! They thought it was a church OF THE PEOPLE — not the Church OF GOD! GOD simply was not in the picture in their eyes!

Christ's apostle did not cave in. These men WENT OUT — several of them formed what they called the "Associated Church" in or near

Washington, D.C. But those so "associated" soon fell out among themselves. GOD WAS NOT IN THEIR PLOT TO TAKE OVER — NOR IN THEIR ATTEMPT TO BUILD A NEW CHURCH OF THEIR OWN when their attempted coup failed! It was the "work of covetous MEN." It fell flat on its face. It came to naught!

"EXCEPT THE LORD BUILD THE HOUSE, THEY LABOUR IN VAIN THAT BUILD IT" (Ps. 127:1).

Later, other "men of renown" in God's Church could not see CHRIST in the Church — only THE PEOPLE! They were in very high position in God's Church — but they wanted to make it MAN'S church. Their conspiracy was far more subtle than that of 1974. They undertook to produce a "scholarly work" setting forth their own distortion and perversion of the doctrines GOD had put in His Church through His chosen apostle. It was done secretly. Christ's apostle was overseas most of the time, and it was carefully kept from him. It was handed out to all the ministers as the "official doctrines of the Church." There were at least six or seven in TOP offices next to Christ's apostle in authority — men trusted and honored. But they were going to make it "THE CHURCH OF PEOPLE," instead of the CHURCH OF GOD. They could not see God nor Christ in their mental picture of God's Church. They were LIBERALS! They liberalized Ambassador College. They liberalized *The Plain Truth* magazine. They changed and liberalized Church doctrines and teachings and beliefs.

But God brought His chosen apostle back from the jaws of DEATH — from complete heart failure. God, through His apostle, PUT THOSE MEN OUT OF HIS CHURCH. Now churches or works of THEIR OWN have been started. But they overlook one thing: "EXCEPT THE LORD BUILD THE HOUSE, THEY LABOUR IN VAIN THAT BUILD IT." God is NOT raising up and building a "house" based on resentment, bitterness and strife — on an attempt to DESTROY what GOD has built and build something for SELF — on an attempt to DESTROY the Worldwide Church of God by their false witness and false accusation of wrongdoing in God's Church, bringing about the massive lawsuit by America's largest state to try to take

over and DESTROY the Church of the living GOD! — and to build for THEMSELVES by “siphoning off” to their own works the members of the Worldwide Church of GOD!

No, this, like several other little tiny offshoots of embittered, angered, revenge-seeking, disfellowshipped former members, MUST COME TO NAUGHT! GOD is not building their houses! So what, now, do we have? Look at them — all now coming DOWN — all coming to naught! They are THE WORKS OF EMBITTERED SELF-SEEKING MEN — ALL FALLING FLAT ON THEIR FACES!

The only good they accomplished was to attract out of GOD’S Church the few malcontents, disgruntled troublemakers. God’s ministers report to me that now that those contentious, accusing, bickering troublemakers have left their local churches, THEY HAVE PEACE!

Of course a few well-meaning members were honestly deceived by these departed leaders. They have since had their eyes opened — they have realized their mistake and have returned HOME into GOD’S Church.

Our GOD turns Satan’s handiwork into blessings for His people.

The living Jesus Christ raised up from death His apostle, whom He has used to SET HIS CHURCH BACK ON THE TRACK OF GOD!

Peace has been restored. God’s TRUTH has been restored — the liberalism swept out! There is peace, harmony and TEAMWORK solidly behind Christ and His chosen apostle at Pasadena. There is now ONE GOAL in the Church — to COMPLETE the Work of God around the world and to prepare GOD’S people for Christ’s soon coming! The Spirit of GOD vitalizes the Church, draws us closer to HIM and closer to ONE ANOTHER!

Now, after some 12 years of tearing down what Christ had built, once again new members are coming in — Church GROWTH is once again, during 1980, up to a 30-percent increase — as it was for 35 long years!

Today GOD ALMIGHTY and the living JESUS CHRIST are very much IN THE PICTURE! It is truly the CHURCH OF GOD — not the “church of PEOPLE”!

Jesus said, “I am the vine, ye are the branches . . . without me ye can do NOTHING” (John 15:5)! □

## The History

(Continued from page 3)

lishing my publishers’ representative business in Chicago, Ill., I aspired some day to own one of the finest and largest homes in the north-shore aristocratic suburb of Winnetka. I wanted to be regarded as ‘important’ by the important.”

### Crashing down to reality

“I was so zealously set on accomplishment that it became the god I served.

“God could not use me as long as I had another ‘god’ more important in my eyes than He. Of course I didn’t know yet, then, that God intended to use me. But when He did, tearing

sight, I could not see GOD in the picture! But God had whittled self-righteous Job down to size. God drove strutting King Nebuchadnezzar of ancient Babylon out to eat grass with wild beasts. God struck down arrogant, persecuting Saul with blindness so He could open his eyes, convert him, change his name to the apostle Paul. And He was adequately able to knock me down off my imaginary perch — again and *again* — until I surrendered completely to Him! I came to realize that all that ‘self-importance’ was pure illusion. I was brought down to reality with a THUD!

“Then instead of vanity, ego, misguided *self-importance* God fed me, for 28 long years, on the raw and scanty diet of humiliation, poverty

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It is true that “where there is no vision the people perish.” But few people realize that the source of true vision is God. . . . this great Work . . . is the Work of God, not of man, and the vision and planning has been that of Jesus Christ.

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that false ambition out of me was like yanking out, root and branch, my very life itself — for *it had been my life!* It was smashing dead everything I had lived and worked for!

“So God started the process by first taking away my business by bankrupting my every major client.” That included such giant corporations as Goodyear Tire & Rubber Co., the J.T. Case farm implement company, John Deere & Co., Dalton Adding Machine Co. and others — all in the flash depression of 1920 went into receivership. “Twice, later, He swept businesses that promised multimillion-dollar rewards right out from under my feet. He brought me down to poverty and hunger!”

I felt I had become like King Midas in reverse — everything I touched turned to nothing!

By hard work, driving myself, resourcefulness, persuasion and determination I had built, by age 28, an income equal to, in the 1980-dollar value, \$175,000 a year!

“But the bigger they come, as the saying is, the harder they fall! And all that ego came crashing down, *down, DOWN!* I had been so big, in my own

and hunger!” Yet on surrender and conversion, He began feeding me also on FAITH replacing *self-confidence*, TRUTH replacing worldly acquisition, the way of His law — LOVE, GIVING, SHARING — replacing carnal GETTING!

“Had God allowed me to suffer financial reverses, even to the point of experiencing real hunger, for a day or a year, I might have regained the same sense of materialistic ambition, once back on my financial feet.

“But God had in mind, as events since have proved, using me as His instrument in preparing the way for the KINGDOM OF GOD — for WORLD PEACE — for universal happiness, joy and salvation. And to that end, for a growing worldwide Work involving tremendous expenditures in His service. He knew that He could never entrust me to handle millions of dollars of His money, so long as my heart remained set on personal STATUS, self-importance and things money could buy to exalt self-vanity.

“But please do not misunderstand. It is not wrong in God’s sight to have or enjoy the good material things in life. God’s greatest men, Abraham,

Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, were prosperous and wealthy men. God Himself prospered them because their ways were right before Him. Although God allowed Satan to take away Job's wealth it was not because his wealth was a sin — but to humble Job from his sin of *self-righteousness*. Once Job's vanity was deflated, God restored his material wealth **DOUBLE!** What is wrong, and therefore sinful, is setting our hearts on these material things instead of God's **TRUE VALUES!** The *love* of material things — the **VANITY** of exalting the *self* above God — of wanting the praise of **PEOPLE** by coveting **STATUS** in their eyes — these are the evil things God wants rooted out. When the heart is set on such things, the **CHARACTER** shrinks inwardly and dries up. **THANK GOD** He saved me from such a fate by 28 years of poverty and humility!"

#### **Dying to live!**

"I was not converted *until* I was brought to the place where I realized my own **NOTHINGNESS** and God's **GREATNESS** — until Satan's injected **VANITY** was driven out and the ego was completely whipped, defeated, *conquered!* When I came to consider myself as a worthless 'hunk of human junk' not even worth throwing on the junk pile — the self-exalting ego *conquered* — completely **REPENTANT** for the way I had traveled — now ready to **TURN FROM** that former life — I told God I was now ready to **GIVE** myself and my life to **HIM!** I didn't then see how He could use it, but if He could He could have it. Jesus Christ had bought and paid for it with His life's blood!

"But let me say to the reader, if God could take that completely defeated, worthless life, and use it to develop and build what **HE HAS DONE**, He can take your life, too, and use it — and in due time convert it into a very immortal **SPIRIT-COMPOSED, GOD-BEING** as one of His children in the glorious **KINGDOM OF GOD!** There is **NO END** to what He may do with **YOUR** life, ultimately! **UNDERSTAND**, what has happened since gives me no glory! But it magnifies the power and glory of **GOD** to take such a worthless but submissive tool and accomplish what **HE** purposes through it!"

But don't ever suppose it comes easy! You will receive a portion — probably a very small portion at first — of God's Holy Spirit upon a **REAL REPENTANCE, FAITH** and baptism. Repentance is far more than **RE-MORSE!** I know a man who could shed almost "buckets of tears" in remorse — but always tomorrow was another day and he had not really *changed* at all! As I said, had God kept me in poverty only a day or a year, I might have reverted right back to the same old ways. **REPENT** means to **TURN FROM!** It means the **DEATH** of the old self. It means a **CHANGED** and a **NEW LIFE** in **CHRIST!** It is often a very **PAINFUL** process — it was for me!

But consider this! You were not

The **REPENTANCE**  
required by God's  
*conditions* to being truly  
converted . . . is  
something far different  
than most people  
suppose! It is infinitely  
more than merely  
"seeing" God's  
truth . . . and being good  
enough to . . . embrace it.

born with "human nature" as we know it. Neither were you born with God's divine nature!

What we call human nature is subtly and gradually injected by **SATAN** the great **DECEIVER!** He is the "prince of the power of the air" (Eph. 2:2). As radio sounds and television pictures come into your home *through the air*, so Satan's nature comes into every human as soon as the baby mind begins to function! **SATAN BROADCASTS!** Not in sounds, words or pictures — but in **ATTITUDES, THOUGHTS, IMPULSES!**

But Satan broadcasts into the infant mind only little by little — selfishness, coveting, vanity, then gradually jealousy and envy, resentment of authority over one, a spirit of **COMPETITION**, the desire to "**GET**," to take, to have, to accumulate. This evil nature grows little by little.

When one is converted — when God calls, opens one's eyes to His

**TRUTH**, brings a real **REPENTANCE** from these ways of "**GET**" — that is, a *turning FROM* those human ways Satan pumped in — one cannot receive **GOD'S HOLY, DIVINE NATURE** in its complete **FULLNESS** all at once! Not any more than you received Satan's nature all at once!

One must **GROW** in grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ! Old ways and habits must be rooted out. A newborn baby doesn't learn to walk all at once. One does not **OVERCOME** the former life, old habits, all at once. In his **MIND** — in the inner **INTENTION** — one makes the full decision to **CHANGE** all at once. He intends to, means to do so, but is unable to become spiritually perfect all at once.

I did deeply **MEAN TO** give my life over to **CHRIST** at conversion. But I did not succeed all at once in doing that job perfectly and completely — nor can **YOU!** So do not become discouraged. It is the **OVERCOMERS** who shall reign with Christ. *I am still overcoming!* So, I hope, are you!

#### **Growth of the Church**

As each individual child of God must **GROW** — and gradually, not attain perfection at one bound all at once — so God's Church in our time has had to **GROW!**

I did carry on continual personal six-nights-a-week campaigns for some time. Radio broadcasting in due time leaped into Salem and Portland, Ore. — then Spokane, Wash., then Los Angeles, Calif., then **COAST TO COAST!** Little by little *The Plain Truth* grew. Little churches were formed from my personal campaigns, but because there was no minister to feed the flock, each soon died. Cooperation continued with the Salem, W.Va., offshoot, and also with the Stanberry Church of God bodies. Persecution from their ministers continued.

By 1946 I planned definitely, as Christ led, to raise up Ambassador College in Pasadena. Headquarters were moved there. The college started Oct. 8, 1947. Beginning 1951 and 1952 a few graduates became ministers. New churches sprang up. It was a story of **GROWTH!** As you and I, as individuals, must **GROW** in spite of adversity, so the Church and Work has **GROWN. JESUS CHRIST DID IT ALL!** □

# Corrected?

(Continued from page 9)

sciously or not, most people are too lazy to make the effort to change. Life has become routine for them and they get into a rut. They vegetate. But vegetating is not growth in a Christian life. If you don't grow, you go backwards.

Unfortunately, some of God's people can't see their own problems. In their self-righteousness, pride or sometimes blindness to their own faults, they don't allow God to show them how to change. They are not willing to pay the price to change!

The patriarch Job paid dearly to learn this lesson. But he learned it well and in the end was more blessed than before. Just like him, we must learn to tell God: "I know that thou canst do every thing, and that no thought can be withholden from thee. Who is he that hideth counsel without knowledge? therefore have I uttered that I understood not; things too wonderful for me, which I knew not. Hear, I beseech thee, and I will speak: I will demand of thee, and declare thou unto me" (Job 42:2-4).

Can you pray like that? Have you learned to accept correction in order to say to God: "I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee. Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes" (verses 5-6)?

That is the attitude we must have to enter God's Kingdom!

## How to give correction

It is said that no one is able to command unless he first is willing to submit to orders. In like manner, before you can correct anyone properly, you must be willing to receive correction. Whether you are giving or receiving correction, you must have understanding, humility and love — without compromise.

If the task of correcting someone falls on your shoulders, be sure you yourself are not guilty of the same faults. Set the right example. As God says, "Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble" (1 Pet. 5:5).

Do you know what a proud person

is? One who does not seek correction. He thinks of himself as better than others. He suffers from self-righteousness. God opposes such a person. When correcting someone, always apply the golden rule, "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you."

Whether at home or at work, with friends or among strangers, be honest and true, "In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works" (Tit. 2:7). Be genuine, not a hypocrite. You can neither give nor receive correction properly if you are a hypocrite.

Paul wrote, "If you are sure that you are a guide to the blind [and every member of God's Church is in some ways a guide to the spiritually blind] . . . a corrector of the foolish [the foolish are those who do not believe in God or God's Word], a teacher of children, having in the law the embodiment of knowledge and truth — you then who teach others, will you not teach yourself?" (Rom. 2:19-21, RSV).

These strong words are meant to change and correct every one of us, to train us in righteousness. Giving correction to others is an important responsibility.

## Conversion is change

Obedience to God is synonymous with wanting to be changed and corrected by Him. Growth spells conversion, and it results from applying the teachings you learn.

Beseech God, "O Lord, correct me, but with judgment; not in thine anger, lest thou bring me to nothing" (Jer. 10:24). It takes courage to pray this way, but a begotten child of God must have courage.

Christ said that unless we become like little children, we shall not enter God's Kingdom. But why? What childlike qualities does Christ desire in adults? Children are more teachable and adapt better to change. They put their trust in those who are watching over them, and they usually do what they are told, even though they may not always agree with it. Christians must be like this. The degree of your conversion is determined by how well you respond to correction.

The ancient Israelites didn't like correction. They wanted change, all right, but only in their own way —

not God's. They didn't care for His authority and laws. They wanted to be like other nations who were cut off from God, free to do as they pleased, even though it meant suffering and death!

Imagine! God was their Ruler, their King and their Protector. He was their Counselor and Teacher. But they rejected Him, preferring to be slaves to sin. Even when the prophet Samuel warned them what would happen to them, they refused to listen. "They said, Nay; but we will have a king over us; That we also may be like all the nations; and that our king may judge us, and go out before us, and fight our battles" (1 Sam. 8:19-20).

Do you wish you were free like other people — free to do what you want? You would only be a slave to sin! We were called to be God's people — not like "other people." We have to be malleable in His hands. How sad that some of God's people leave the Church because they want to be like "other people," rejecting correction because of pride, stubbornness and vanity.

Be grateful when you are corrected. Accept reproof with humility and make the necessary changes. Afterwards, forget the mistakes God has forgiven. Don't burden yourself with a guilt complex, which can only hinder your growth. God is always willing to forgive you if you accept correction and change.

"He who hates reproof will die," says God. That's an awesome warning. But He adds, "He whose ear heeds wholesome admonition will abide among the wise" (Prov. 15:10, 31, RSV).

Notice: If you heed admonition you will live with the wise. The wise are those who listen to God's counsel, submit themselves to His authority, accept correction and live by His every word.

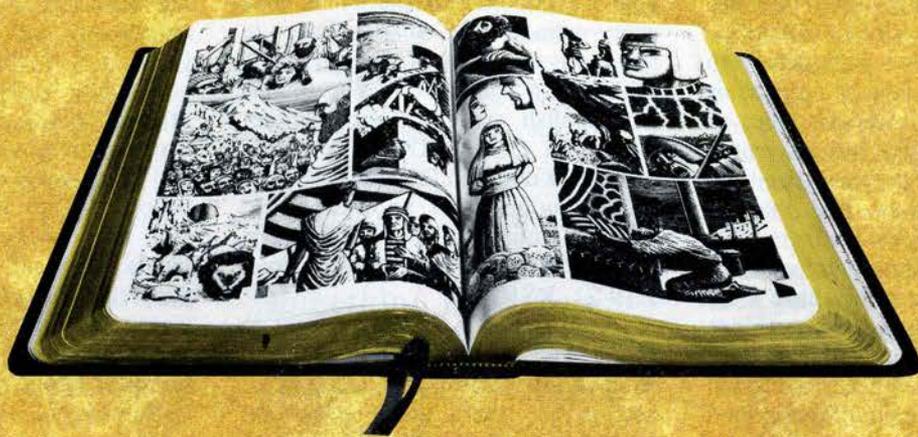
"And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever" (Dan. 12:3). They will be members of God's immortal spiritual Family.

These are God's words, and they cannot be broken. If you hate correction, you will die. But if you love correction, you will live forever!

What's your choice? □

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